



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE
HISTORY
OF AN
IDOL.

PRICE 1/-

49.2074.





THE
HISTORY OF AN IDOL,

ITS
RISE, REIGN, AND OVERTHROW.

“I will destroy their idols, and cause their images to cease. (Ezekiel xxx. 13.) And their idols will I utterly abolish.” (Isaiah ii. 18.)

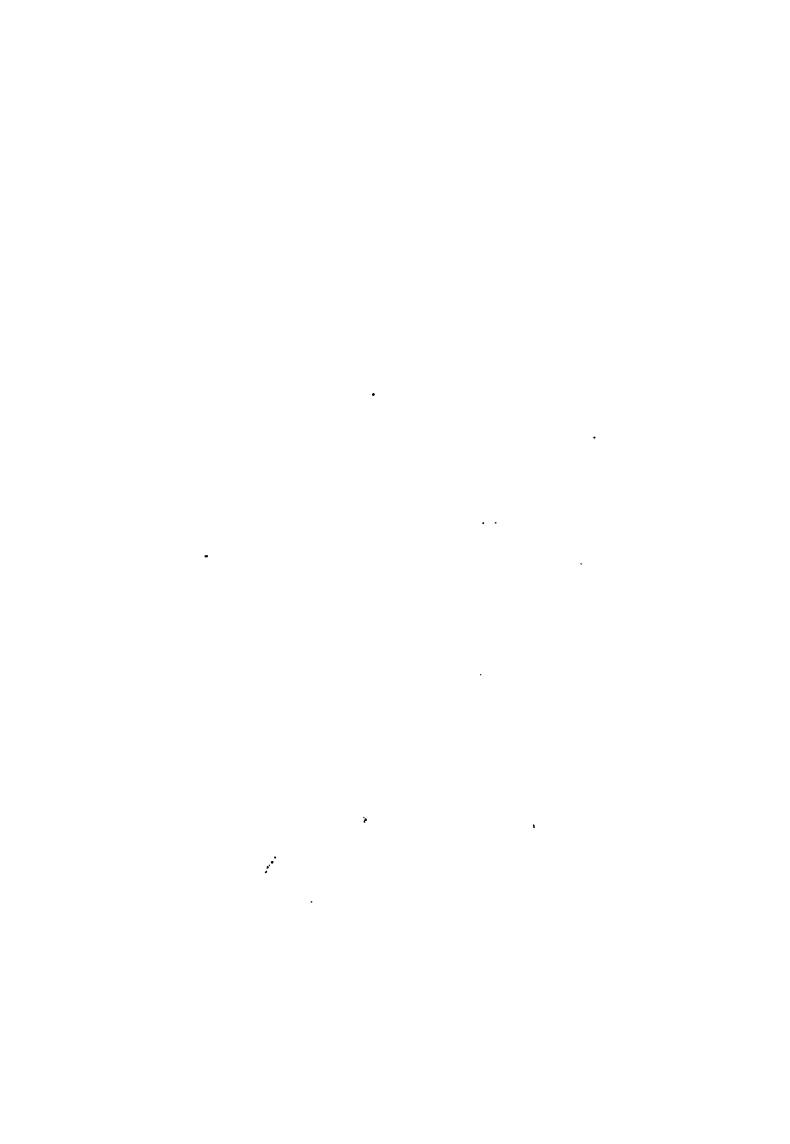
LONDON :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN NICHOLS,
Milton Press, corner of Charing Cross Hospital.

SOLD ALSO BY SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL,
Stationers' Hall Court, City.

1849.





INTRODUCTION.

A FEW words to assign as reasons why the following pages are brought before the Church, is deemed necessary : but the writer cannot reconcile himself to have any *recommendatory prefaces* from man, to introduce to spiritual minds, that which is the work alone of God. He looks rather for the blessing of the Lord to follow it, than for the bell of some great man to be rung before it.

First then, God laid the matter with a solemn weight upon the soul ; and has accompanied the writing with savor and power, and given the assurance it should accomplish his will.

Secondly, That the church of Christ may bear their testimony to the truth of the work of God in the writer's soul, in opposition to the devil's strong and continued contention, for its being an outlandish and unheard of conversion. He maintains that the writer never met with a parallel case all the days of his life,—*which is true*. That the people of God are always either taken out of

the religious world, or the reprobate : from a self-righteous state, or openly sinful and wicked ; but never from the regions of ART AND SCIENCE. This the writer could not contradict from *observation* ; but he finds a merciful provision is made or such an attack, in the incontrovertible scriptures of truth. God there declares, that “ the Lord of hosts doth take away from the men of Judah and Jerusalem the whole stay and staff of bread and of water ;” and that amongst these, *his people* is the “ *cunning artificer*,” or **INGENIOUS ARTIST**, and eloquent orator.” (Isaiah iii. 1 & 3.)

Thirdly, To show that the believer can and does backslide.

Fourthly, To classify himself with those, who if they publish anything in the world, “ **PUBLISH THE NAME OF THE LORD.**”

*

Chelmsford,
August 1st, 1849.

THE HISTORY OF AN IDOL.

THOUGH the impressions, which at the early age of eight, when in a preparatory school, the writer received direct from God, were in after years somewhat confirmed by constant attendance on the searching ministry at "The Grove;" yet during the spring of life there appeared to grow little or nothing, but the weeds of a carnal and corrupt nature. The tyro days of boyhood, therefore, were passed with the recollection only of the good discipline of one religious master, and the bad divinity that was preached at the village church by another. These being ended the writer in the year 1829, was ushered into commercial life, articled to a Colourman in London.

The mind now freed from scholastic discipline, and as yet untaught the trials of an apprentice, breathed the fresh air of liberty, and walked at large in the regions of uncontrolled thought. The world unfolded its inviting treasures; pleasure presented its alluring charms, vice in every shape; company of every sort, parties, places of amusement, and public resorts; each passed in review before him: but fame, IMMORTAL FAME alone had a glory in it, unsurpassed by the seeming excellence of every other attraction. Located in the

midst of men of genius, and surrounded by the studios of painters; to which from the associative nature of his calling, he had frequent and easy access; the exquisite beauties of 'pictorial art' soon ravished his eyes. Captivated by the charm of colours in the bright productions of the limner's skill; the smouldering embers of intellectual depravity were so stirred up within him, that fired with the fantastic hope of reputation, he once caught the high spirit of a painter, and set up a study for himself. The rising flame was fanned by youthful ambition and pride; and enchanted did the child become with the pleasing spectacles of artistic vanity that the easel produced, that he grew a confirmed enthusiast, that art which he thought was the glory of the world.

A line of things was now chosen, society selected and plans formed for the life of a *Landscape Painter*. From this time business became to his aspiring spirit a wearisome drudge, as the 'shop' had a lowness in it, much beneath the pride of his ambitious mind. The language of the heart set upon a *professional* elevation of society; and contemptuously looking upon the sordid idol of this "nation of shopkeepers" then was

" For paltry gold let pining misers sigh,
My soul invokes a nobler deity!
Smit with the glorious avarice of fame,
I claim no less than an immortal name."

Thus, in the aspirations of genius, did he sit

the corruptible sceptre of renown, and pant for the laurels of fame. That shadow of useless good became to him, the soul and essence of all that was worthy of attainment; and which was viewed as heaven's reward upon the mentally great, because, consequently, they were believed to be meritoriously good. This gave to the ebullitions of genius an impetus of unbounded desire, and which pushed his rising spirit for preferment, through all the obstructions of opposing persons and things. Fame expanded in glory, as it was pursued through difficulties.

Thus inflamed by the fervour of youth for honour and distinction among men, there was such unwearied assiduity, close application, and constant practice, that no rest was given either to the mind or body. The midnight lamp was kept burning for the study of works of art; or on the leads of the house-top, the hours for sleep were employed in portraying the bright features of the silver shining moon. Unwearied through excess of courage, and the clothes not taken off all night; there was an anxious watching for the first light tinge of the morning sun, which was painted again at mid-day, when the bright luminary was in its full meridian glory; and the act repeated at sunset to catch its last declining rays. Thus was the mind wholly absorbed in the contemplation of that which appeared to be most worthy the true dignity of his nature, and the best calculated to bring him happiness, rest, and peace.

But God, who is rich in mercy, "even when

we were dead in trespasses and sins," and when the writer was walking according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, *and of the mind*; for the great love wherewith he loved him, was carrying on a quickening work within; that "in ages to come," (and it is now just twenty years ago) he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards him through Jesus Christ of which he hopes yet to speak. But, O Lord,

When I think in my heart, of the love thou hast shown,
And the mercy bestowed upon me;

I scarcely have patience enough to go on,
But would stop to talk ONLY OF THEE.

Still as it may not deduct from the glory of God, but the rather add thereunto in the end, perhaps the spiritual reader will bear with the writer awhile.

About this time he placed himself, under a student of the Royal Academy, for instruction in the art of painting, and a friendship was also formed with a youth of expanding intellect and great limning abilities, who became his constant companion and fellow-worker at the same easel; God was pleased to make use of both these acquaintances for his benefit. The first artist being introduced to his pupil's father, he was by him taken down into the country twice a week to paint the portrait of the writer's grandfather; at whose abode was a sister, zealous for the Lord of hosts. There he was taught the ways of *Christians*, to which he conformed with apparent de-

light, and having learnt some of the language of Canaan, confessed he was made better by the visit. But on his return to town, the writer had occasion to go into an artist's colour shop with him, when he was immediately saluted by the proprietor (one of his worldly companions, and to whom in the mean time he had evidently made a mockery of his religious patrons) thus :—" Well, S. have you left the psalm-singing saints yet ?" A significant nod to silence was the only response, when the subject was stifled ; but ah, thought our hero, is this the way he has abused my sister's good instructions ? Though but a boy and in pursuit of the same visionary spectre in art, he had no inclination to join the mocker in his ridicule, but at once, and for ever, saw the vanity and folly of attempting to wash the black-a-moor white. (Matthew vii. 6.)

The use God made in " ages to come" of the second acquaintance, was to teach him a lesson upon his sovereignty in the election and choice of his people. For which purpose he fixed his mind upon this text, " Two shall be grinding at a mill, the one shall be taken and the other left." This was fully exemplified, and the fact of God's choice of the one and rejection of the other, most clearly seen, as two were painting at the same easel, the one was taken and the other left. God in his sovereign mercy has been pleased to take the writer, whilst his friend is left to follow his vain pursuit to this day.

But not more ardent in the phantom chase of

ame were his companions, than passionately devoted to the art was himself; for everything in the world that would assist him in his mental researches was made subservient to his use, and every opportunity embraced for prosecuting his studies. The public exhibitions were frequented, private collections of paintings sought out, the Elysium abodes of artists resorted to; the Old Masters read and studied, the theatres visited for their splendid scenes, and even assistance on one (luckily esteemed) occasion, was lent to paint him. Academical honours were sought, to live and die an *artist* was determined upon, and unknown to any one (but the party concerned) a private room was paid for away from the house of his apprenticeship. Here he would steal away from the hated din and bustle of commerce, that he might enjoy the delightful recreation of solitude, and revel in the ecstasies of study: and here many public pictures were painted and he received the first reward of his labours. In this way he passed the years appointed him for learning a useful and lucrative trade, soaring above the sensualities of the "shop," so that his master was offended, his father disappointed, and friends grieved at the sight. But these were of no avail, he was on the high road to fame and the fortune of genius, and none but God could stop him.

The years of apprenticeship drawing to a close, and the important age of twenty-one at hand, high were the hopes and joyful the anticipations of *being able to carry out the projects of illusive*

fancy. The bright prospects of a happy future quickened the desire, and ripened the resolution to leave the business then engaged in, and follow the willing bent of his fame struck mind. But how merciful is God, "the keeper of Israel," not to let us have our own way. What misery is there in all earthly happiness attained by the wisdom of man ; but what happiness is there with all godly sorrow, in the path of the fear of the Lord. Knowing and having proved them both, let *me* have the portion of those that mourn now, for to such the comforts of "the Comforter" belong. But the heart of this child of foolishness was then set upon terrestrial bliss ; the paradise of those who live on empty sounds, who rack the tender brain, and tear away their flesh, for fading honours, and a dying name. To such vain and perishing felicities he was then aspiring ; and which induced him, now that he was "out of his time," to seek for employment as a *draftsman*, preparatory to his establishment as an *artist*. But the proper interference of a wise and prudent father, overruled this rash determination of his son ; and he was still made to pursue the same avocation in other parts of the metropolis. But here too the pernicious voluptuousness of a painter's pleasure followed him ; and which neither the fettering discipline of *increased labour*, nor the wholesome severity of *additional hours of business*, served to correct. The darling idol of the heart was held in higher estimation than ever, and even worshipped with a spoiling adoration

unknown in the simpler days of youthful study. Passion became to him the perfection of his nature. Indeed, nothing else (save the sister arts, poetry and music) was a pleasurable pursuit, for there was an exquisiteness of enjoyment in the delectable art of painting, that was perfect enchantment to the writer; whom, though now doomed to the toil of sixteen and eighteen hours a day in a business hated and despised; yet the palette was taken in hand after ten, and frequently after twelve o'clock at night, when all the inmates of the house were asleep—such was the vehement desire to excel. This was in a pent-up garret that looked out upon slates and tiles, and where time first showed it had given to the constant habit of night study, a power over the poor weak body. But so was he led astray by the luxury of enthusiastic sensations, that, that which in the week he was legitimately deprived of, namely, time and opportunity to pursue his favourite study, the *Sunday* was taken to supply. Yes, this day, holy, through its being sanctified or set apart for holy purposes, and sacred for the services held in the name of Jesus, to sound his honours and spread abroad his fame; was, by the idolater, sacrificed at the shrine of his perverted intellect and earthly mind, to gratify the rage of passion, and give full power to the lust of ambitious pride. The annoying cares of a week of busy degradation at an end, he would shake off the fetters that bound him to the counter; *when through the sinful impetuosity of enraged*

enthusiasm, he would sally out of town with the liberated joy of a released slave, from smoke and shopkeepers, to where

“Great Nature dwells, and lavish in her beauty,
The directing hand—of art demanded,”

Here the canvass and colours were carried out into the fields, to paint the full orb'd ruler of the skies, with all the bright effects flowing from its effulgence (throwing a thousand visionary delights into the aerial expanse,) on nature's lovely carpet of green, under the fair free canopy of heaven.

“Or calmly seated in some village bower,
He gave to themes of art, the studious hour.”

But even here the Spirit of God followed him, and which served to spoil the exquisite pleasure of nature's study—HE having a higher and better bliss in reserve, and a nobler theme than nature; even “*the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*,” for the sweet meditation of his soul. Indeed, God had never left him unchecked to pursue his inglorious career; but had from his very childhood put a “thus far shalt thou go” in his way, and which ever served to keep him from rushing beyond the bounds of Almighty preservation, or sinking beneath the everlasting arms of protection. Mercifully

“Preserved in Jesus when the feet ran swift to hell.”

There was a marked distinction between him and his companions in sin, according to the will of God.

Thus sensible that God had possessed his reins, and covered him from his mother's womb, had

compassed his path, and was acquainted with all his ways, he said within himself, "Ah, where shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I make my bed in hell, (which I have done) thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, (and this I had essayed to do,) behold thou art there; thou hast beset me before and behind, and laid thine hand upon me." Yes, this was visible in the midst of all his perverse ways and wicked practices—God was with him in his sin, not to participate in it, but to testify against it. "The Lord thundered from heaven and the Most High uttered his voice." He sent the wind, the earthquake, and the fire; and then a "still small voice" in the heart; and this bore its testimony against him. Therefore, though there was a doing "that which was evil in the sight of the Lord;" there was not an inward approving it, but a conscience continually *accusing* him before God, even whilst the deceitful heart, by subtle argument, would be *excusing* him to his fellow men.

Now this weekly practice persisted in, drew from the before-mentioned sister in the country, a sweet and affectionate letter, of which the following is an extract:—

* * * * *

"You my dear boy, have written me a long and interesting letter; to me interesting, because *it appears intimately* related to your own internal

happiness, and what would be likely to promote that, would be of the deepest concern to me. You know not the anxious solicitude I at times feel for you all. We are one—one family on earth; think you, we shall all meet in heaven? The thought frequently amounts almost to anguish, when I apprehend a separation for ever. O, my dear brother, which will be missing at the great day of account? I pray that we may make one family in glory.

“You are not saying this is enthusiasm in me, no, if you hope I shall make allowance for excess of feeling in your description of inward enjoyment, you will extend the same liberality to me. Indeed I am serious, it is too solemn a subject to trifle upon: and my desire is, to write with great affection, *but great plainness*; you must bear with me if I do not answer your expectations, and give proof of my interest in that which seems so much to engross *you*; but while I pass by that, for one of much greater importance, I would not be supposed to lightly esteem it; or to consider you other than praiseworthy for devoting a *portion* of your time to what (in your situation) may be admitted well in accordance with good sense to understand. But it is not as you consider it to be, of *paramount* importance. All such perishable things will avail us nothing when we come to die. O that you, and each of us, may be enabled to look unto Jesus, not only for safety and salvation at last, but for peace and pardon *now*.

“ I could not but read with the deepest solicitude that part of your letter where you appear confidently to affirm that you have

“ ‘ A home secure in Jesus breast.’ ” *

Is it so? then the prayers of your departed mother and sisters are answered. But tell me, on what ground you build your hope. I well know the inward recesses of our hearts, witness what the world will never know, but our conduct must be in accordance with our principles, or how are others to know to whom we belong. This is one of the difficulties a young christian has to surmount, to put in practice before the world what he internally delights in. But my dear boy, I am now coming very close, and am glad of an opportunity and disposition so to do; and if you knew the solemnity that pervades my mind, while in the presence of an all-seeing God, I am addressing one as dear almost as my own flesh, you would not wonder that I should say out all my thoughts and tell him every *fear* that rises to his condemnation. No, my dear brother, I would not wound

* What confusion must have been in the writer's mind; practising the unfruitful works of darkness with intensity and *love*; and yet professing to be a child of the light. Alas, how apt are young persons, especially those brought up in a profession, to speak with an unwarranted confidence, and give expression to ideas, that at times they *dare not* do after many years experience. Nevertheless it is apparent that the child was “leaping in the womb” of *God's providence*, before he basked in the sunshine of *his grace*.

you, but I must be faithful; I must tell you, that I want to see more consistency of conduct, *more regard to the Sabbath*. I cannot help mourning, that you do not manifest sufficient love to the commands of God, to make you relinquish the gratifications of painting and music† on that sacred day. It is no argument that you have "*no time in the week*;" and from thence I must naturally infer, that you have less to spend upon the concerns of eternity. If business occupy all but *one hour*, cannot you divide that small but valuable sixty minutes, and spare only a fourth part for what is of so much importance! Do seriously think of the course you are pursuing every Sabbath-day. God has said that *in his temple* he will be found. Where are you on the Sunday morning? If you really derived soul profit from the ordinance of the preached word, you would go to receive (to use your own words) "*bread to satisfy the soul*," because God has promised there to meet and bless his waiting children.

"I sincerely trust you will be enabled to give these affectionate appeals due consideration. Is any sacrifice too great for the Lord? Not if we love him; we cannot do too much for the objects we love. Let me entreat you then to relinquish these short lived pleasures for others of a more satisfying nature.

"Thus having penned what has been suggested to my mind by the Disposer of all our thoughts,

† The sister art was equally loved, though not so ardently pursued.

and for direction in which I earnestly prayed at the commencement,

“ I remain,
“ Your affectionately attached Sister,
“ L. E. C.”

Ware, Sept. 26, 1836.

This touching and truly melting appeal was not without effect, “ the prayer of the righteous avail-eth much,” but it did not prevent a continuance of the Sunday practice. Nevertheless, it led the youth who ever had a love for the gospel sound, and was an attentive hearer (though not an obedient doer) of the word, into the sanctuary of God. But his leech-like sin stuck to the good resolutions of his heart, and plastered them over with evil. The chapel selected was chosen on his part with an eye only to the convenience of a half-way house to the Hornsey-fields; the colour-box being carried there too, and placed under the pew’s seat that it might be ready for use when the service was over. It was then taken out as before and the study of nature resumed.

But ah, the sermon would sometimes go with him, when the sharpness of that piercing sword of the Spirit, the word of God, would sever the gordian knot of this sin, untieable by any natural means, and so check the wild outbreaks of his enthusiastic mind, and stop his impetuous rush after arts’ delusive joys. Such was the power of the preached word by the faithful pastor of that place,*

* *Mr. Richard Luckin.*

that it did much to damp the ardour of his zeal, and spoil the pleasure of his pursuit. A counter object was placed before him, when a conflict in the soul ensued, the Spirit strove within him. Yes, these days and these sermons will long be remembered, for the savour of the name of Jesus, poured forth at that time, into a heart being prepared for its reception, has retained its sweetness to this day. Oh, the long-suffering and goodness of God! thus to bear with his wayward child, and to bless him in spite of all his determination to sin and rebel. But still the fond heart clung with a pertinacious hold to its idol, nor would it or did it yield its grasp, till *forced* by the actual power of God.

Again, in order to blunt the keen edge of his high desire and bring down the pride of his haughty spirit, another living obstacle was raised. Painting on the Lord's-day was practised to the great grief of a dear widowed father. Ah, the writer (truly at this time a Ben-oni, the son of his father's sorrow) can at this moment call to a mind retentive in the memory of all things touching the ill treatment of a kind parent; the soul wounding fact of his well nigh bringing down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Witness the following affecting letter sent on an occasion of the mad-brained enthusiast's turning his back upon his father's house, because he was parentally reprov'd, when entering his otherwise peaceful home, on the previous Lord's-day, laden with the fruits of his Sunday morning's amusement and spoils of his sinful folly.

THE HISTORY

Dear J.

must suppose that conscience highly
of your conduct, and does not presume
ge you with want of parental affection.
you forgot one of God's commands,
ar thy father and"—a dear mother thou hast
lishonour, nor I a beloved partner to share
e my joys and sorrows. And there may
eriod, and that not far distant, when you
t have a father's house to turn your back

But let me earnestly entreat you not to
your back upon God ; but let your constant
r be "hold up my goings in thy paths that
ootsteps slip not." I say no more, but com-
l you to the word of his grace, which is able
eep you from falling ; and to build you up,
give you an inheritance among them that are
stified. That you may share in these and all
blessings promised in the word of God to his
ple, is the unfeigned prayer of

Your affectionate father,

ibath Evening,
Oct. 2, 1836.

J. C.

On being shown the two slight sketches done
on the day that gave rise to this letter, a godly
nister in Essex truly beloved, observed, "Well,
se foolish things brought you a prize." Yes,
olesome reproof is to be highly prized when
ministered in love. But how mild was the
ministration of his father's justice, compared

with the rigid power that used to be exercised by the parent in patriarchal days, (Gen. xxxviii. 24.) It the better sets forth the merciful dealings of our Father in heaven, who always punishes his people less than their iniquities deserve. (Ezra ix. 13.) Though the foregoing letter failed to check the fever heat of the writer's mind at the time it was penned, it has answered a great end in his soul since the day it has been so highly prized.

But who can tame the lion save the God who made him; his uncurbed nature still ran wild; and the frantic ardour of his inflamed mind continued its hot pursuit after fame. O, the sinful infatuation that betook him—every object, animate or inanimate that surrounded him in the shop, was declared (in a letter) to be “perfect monuments of disgust;” and lines were penned in the extravagance of fury, one specimen of which is subjoined:—

Time still goes on, yet here I am,
A menial to the monster man;
A vassal at the counter board,
To serve some vile illiterate lord,
And after all, am I to be
Of his accurs'd fraternity?
No, God forbid.

Such was the language of his heart upon the subject of business, but which faintly describes his real feelings, these were desperate indeed; positive ferocity marking the features of his mind in sublime madness, when in the zenith of his glory. Oh, he is at a loss sometimes to know which to admire and extol most, the love and mercy of

God in revealing to him the evil of sin, or the power of God in subduing it. But one thing is certain—it was *God alone that did it*. The madness and wickedness of the folly with which he was enamoured, was unconquerable by any other means. The sinful enthusiasm had taken too firm hold of him for anything earthly to avail, whether a power of rude force or soft persuasion. Nothing but the stern strength of God's overcoming might, could tame the wildness of fancy, or check the wickedness of disobedience: and this *he* did, though it pleased him to take his time, dividing his work in wise arrangement and skill. He first laid his hand upon the body, now ripe through intemperate study, for disease, and struck it with a malignant distemper.* This caused him to be taken from the business in which he had then been eight years, and to which he never afterwards returned. Thus far did God grant him the desires of his heart upon that subject, though in a very different way (as we shall yet see) and for a very different end to what he had designed.

Removed from the scene of his enthusiastic struggles, he passed the Christmas of 1837 at his father's house with a high fever of the brain, suffering the torments of hell. The Royal Exchange of London was burning at the time, but his soul was in a hotter fire than that, for the fire of divine wrath, the fury of divine vengeance, and the fierceness of God's anger against sin,

* See the *Gospel Magazine* for July, 1844, page 329.

was poured out upon him. And so was he tortured with anguish at the sight of his lost and ruined condition, that he was driven to the verge of madness through despair of pardon ; and he underwent a torment of soul affliction, until he knew that his sins were forgiven. Indeed, such was the intensity of his sufferings in the "fiery trial," that it seemed as if heaven and hell, or God and the devil were striving for the mastery of his soul ; but he was mercifully preserved in the midst of the flames (sent only to consume the chaff and stubble he had gathered), (Isa. v. 24), for he saw a form like unto the Son of God, (ah, it was the Son of God himself) (Dan. iii. 25,) beheld through a mysterious and incomprehensible vision) ; who, whilst he gave commandment to the fire to burn up that which was at enmity to himself, restrained its power to hurt the soul—this was to be purified and purged, not burnt up and destroyed.

O, wondrous day of grace, when by the "Spirit of judgment" and the "Spirit of burning," as fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven, the soul was burnt out of a satanic world of science as was Lot out of sensual Sodom, whilst many a monument as useless as the pillar of mineral salt was beheld, left standing on the road ; when the Lord, merciful unto him, brought him forth and set him without the city of destruction, and led him by a right way to Zion, the city of solemnities. It was a memorable occasion ; a moment of time destined to live in eternal

days, when the Spirit of the Lord God moved upon the void and formless face of nature's corruption, a chaos indeed; and creating anew in Christ Jesus, a soul in the indestructible image of God, breathed into him the breath of spiritual life. The Father's glory then shining in the expansion of his spiritual kingdom below, divided between that light which is the life of man; and that darkness which is death unto man. And God said "Let there be light," and unto the soul he said, "Arise, shine for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." "For behold, darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon *thee* and his glory shall be UPON THEE. Arise my love, my fair one and come away."

Then the writer rising with new created spiritual powers, with a quickened apprehension unto meetness for heaven; and clothed in the holiness of him who dwells there, thought and hoped in his heart, that it was an immediate call to glory and to God; and he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." But no, the gain of dying was to be deferred till Christ had been lived and *proved*; therefore to "abide in the flesh" was more needful for him. For the life given was to be made manifest on the earth—the light imparted to shine before men in the world. He was to *live* the life of the righteous before he died their death. Thus the call to "*come away*," was *to come away from sin unto Jesus, to leave all*

and follow him. To come out from among the ungodly and to be separate from sinners: whilst the command to arise was, "Arise ye, and depart, from the world for this is not your resting place, because it is polluted—it shall destroy your comforts (if you stay in it) with a sore and lamentable destruction." (Micah ii. 10.) "Arise ye, and depart from iniquity; cease to do evil and learn to do well."

Then was the *vow* made unto the Lord, when repentance was an easy thing, when hope ran mountains high, and faith was strong; that he would serve the Lord with gladness; diligently obey his precepts; cheerfully observe his commands; and walk before him in the land of *the living* all the days of his life.

The will of God being now thus far accomplished, he took the crucible from off the fire: and though life had been despaired of, it not being his "time to die," he recovered. Ah, happy season of returning health, which brought with it the joys of God's salvation. When the Bible and poor John Bunyan's "Holy War," took the place of Du Fresnoy and Sir Joshua Reynolds; when the proud honour of earthly fame was trampled in the dust; and another way was found for exercising his talents other than copying the mere works of nature; and that in *celebrating the praises of the God of grace*. Indeed, so was he absorbed in the contemplation of divine *realities*, and enamoured with the new beauties that presented themselves to his astonished and admiring view

that he felt quite loosened from all earthly things and severed from his sensual toys. The "high places" had been removed, and the idols cast down by this fresh king upon the throne of the heart: when all the tinsel ornaments of his profession were so lightly esteemed that they were cast aside as nothing worth, to be destroyed.*

Now whilst the family had retired into the country to enjoy their Christmas festivities (a practice hated and despised by the Lord, Amos v. 21) the writer felt blest beyond them all, and could truly say he had "a merry Christmas and a happy new year." And he has reason to bless God too, for appointing this season for his affliction, as he has ever since hailed its annual return with a birthday delight, rejoicing in the time when "born of the Spirit," Christ was formed in him; as the many did when Christ first appeared among them, (Luke i. 14); and being mercifully preserved in the desire and determination, as far as in him lies, to shun all gatherings, except the "two or three in the name of the Lord," he has been favoured at many a returning Christmas, not only to view with a solemn composure the awful tragedy of Mount Calvary; but to realize an interest in the blessed fact, of

"Jesus crucified for him,"

and to rise with sacred delight in the soul reviving truth, of

"Jesus risen from the dead.*"

** The servant was ordered to tear up his canvass pictures into ribbons, to light her fire with the "water colour drawings," and to burn the wooden frames.*

The convalescent came down stairs with these words fastened as a nail in the sure place of his heart. "*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after God.*" How suitable a word of caution at the commencement of a new career. Surely the word of God was written for the people of God, for how adapted to *all* their states, conditions, and circumstances, and how highly to be prized is the profitably applied scriptures of truth.

The child thus "born unto the house of David *Josiah* by name," had a sign given him that same day whereby he was admonished of God "to do that which is right in the sight of the Lord, and to walk in all the ways of the Lord, blameless in Jesus, neither turning to the right hand or to the left. (James i. 17). Thus did God take him by the arms and teach him, as he did Ephraim, the way he should go. And it had a salutary effect upon him so long as he remembered who had healed him. (Hosea xi. 3.) For the late chastisement having brought with it an evidence of sonship before unknown, the conscience was made specially tender as the divine relationship betwixt God and his soul was more signally revealed. And whilst abiding under a sense of this union, whereby the spirit was invisibly and blessedly brought away from everything that is fleshly, and absorbed in the anointing and bedewing, the holy unction and divine teaching of God the Holy Ghost, there was the desire to live wholly and solely to the

praise of the glory of his grace, and the willing heart to walk in a wise and perfect way before the Lord. For so was vanity stamped upon all worldly things that each object of former attraction, Art, and all its appendages of honour, was labelled with "*not after God,*" "*not after God.*"

Then that which *was* after God, after and according to his way, will, and command, was diligently sought out, and dutifully observed. The heart was enlarged thereunto; drawn by the love of Jesus, attracted by his beauty; and sweetly overcome by his charms. Thus the first pure risings of spiritual desire centred in the person of God's Son; and then was it a time of love indeed, when the soul blossomed and budded in the spring creation of the new heavens and the new earth; when the bright beams of the tabernacle of glory which "the Lord pitched and not man," and "set for a sun" in the celestial firmament of God's *kingdom*, now *come*, shone with radiancy divine, as a "great light from heaven," into the soul. Ah, this day of his espousals when the virgin soul was betrothed in righteousness and faithfulness unto the Lord for ever, was truly the day of the gladness of his heart. When the bridegroom delighting himself in his Hephzibah, decked himself with the excellent ornaments of his perfections, and came to rejoice over his bride. (Isa. lxii. 5.) So that when he allured her by the sweet language "thou art all fair my *love*, I do behold no spot in thee;" the *captivated soul replied*, "the king hath brought me

into his chambers, there let him kiss me with the kisses of his lips, for his love is better than wine." Happy, happy time of love ; blessed, blissful days of peace.

Now the word of the Lord for "instruction in righteousness" was, "Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed beside the Shepherd's tent;" and truly did the soul lie down in "green pastures, and feed beside the still waters:" he dwelt much in the house of the Lord, saw his goings in the sanctuary, sweetly felt his power in the preached word, sat down under his shadow with great delight; and did eat with the poor in Zion, the bread of heaven and was satisfied—God abundantly blessing the provision. Ah, joyful days of strong and lively faith; sacred time of first love for the soul, when the candle of the Lord shone upon his head, when the Almighty was with him and his *secret* upon his tabernacle; when going out and coming in, glorifying God, he met him and blessed him at that *very house* of his, where he had so often carried his sinful treasures for convenience; as he did also at "The Grove," under the ministry of that "master in Israel" that is there . . . Thus he went out of Egypt joining the host of Israel in their march unto the heavenly Canaan. And he lived in un-murmuring happiness till the care begetting anxieties of the wilderness caused a subsidence of spiritual concern.

Then it came to pass, as the soul went to present itself before the Lord, that Satan also went

with it; who having waited with malignant impatience, watched for *his hour* and the power of darkness, to deface that fair image of soul purity, stamped upon the new born babe in Christ. This enemy, therefore, was as busy sowing tares, as the faithful husbandmen were the good seed. Though the heart had been purified in the furnace of affliction, as gold is by the fire, the drossy embers of ever burning lusts now stirred up by the devil, soon sent forth their smoke to discolour it. Sin was not exterminated from the nature, though subdued for a while: for the life, or strength, or root of evil always exists, and is never entirely eradicated till this mortal puts on immortality. Thus it was not long before there was a shooting forth again of natural propensities and a springing up of natural desires, for though the enemy had sustained a signal defeat and suffered afresh from the ranklings of the wound of his "bruised head;" yet he was not dead. The corrupt heart of man is *ever* the living charnel house of sin—the foul residence of satan—there he sits to nurture evil and to nourish sin. And so it is with natural propensities, they never die, till the nature that possesses them is destroyed; therefore, the writer soon found to his sorrow, that it was even as good old Berridge used to say,

" My dead foes rise with double force,
And drag me down to hell."

With recruited health there was a revival of the spirits, and a fresh sight of lovely nature

brought to mind former feelings of delight. Nature enlivened by the bright warm light of returning spring, vegetation putting forth its annual powers, the green clad trees, and sun-lit fields; the youthful passions lively and strong; *time* and *opportunity* to pursue any object of attraction: God, as it were, leaving the soul, so that it began to experience the solitude of the desert; nature perishing there, began to long again for the flesh pots of Egypt. A cloud of darkness veiling the mind, so that it became feelingly "destitute;" slothfulness seizing the soul; corruption exerting itself, depravity putting forth strength; remorse and regret at the loss of household gods, which the devil suggested were ordered to be destroyed in a fit of foolish desperation. The ever lusting flesh going out in especial cravings after forbidden things; all, all, conspired to cherish and nourish the renewed desire for some harmless trifling with the innocent pencil.

This was first manifested in the sinful act of longing to *see* the demolished idols; and secondly, in the *heart walking after the eyes*, and desiring the foolish things again when seen. Yes, the kitchen depository of his torn up pictures was secretly visited, and the lumber cupboard slyly peeped into, as if for a *last look* at the remaining fragments of art; which, like the broken ornaments of some time-crumbled temple, were thought too valuable to be entirely destroyed, and so were gathered up and stuck together again. O, sinful act of idolatry! awful first show of a divided

heart; for which the writer had ten years of soul suffering.* Alas! how soon are the sinful workings of the flesh manifest when "the spirit is not stedfast with God." If evil is present when we would do good, how much more powerful when the heart is indifferent to its interests. He that dealeth with a slack hand will surely be overcome of evil. The writer having now "left off to take heed unto the Lord, the abominable flesh lusted again to eat of the things of Egypt *freely*. The old man of sin, as the "woman weeping for Tammuz," sighed to see his robes in the dust: and though they had become to the soul as "filthy garments," there was, nevertheless, a putting them on again. "How are the things of Esau searched out, how are the hidden things sought up." Alas, it is by treacherous dealing, therefore has the Lord well called Israel, "a transgressor from the womb." (Isa. xlviii. 8.)

But so it was with this image of delight, like the forbidden fruit, it was first seen, then desired, then tasted, and thus he fell into sin. But God reproved him in the very first *act* which followed this heart digression. Taking a large book (in the absence of a table easel) to support his now

* Young Christian, beware of the *first* wrong step. Nothing is easier than to take it; nothing is harder than to retrace it. The fall comes next to the slip. Look forward to ten long years of soul affliction, and see if you are prepared for the consequences attending disobedience.

"Knowing the terrors of the Lord I would persuade men."
"Little children keep yourselves from idols." "Pray without ceasing."

first painted picture; the whispering of a small still voice was heard in the conscience reminding him that that book was the *Bible*. When, what thought he, is it possible! that dear book of books which had lately been such a blessing! What, lay your idolatrous sacrifice unto the devil, on the holy book of God? It was like a dagger in his side, and had such a wounding effect upon him that he could not do another stroke; but hastily putting his bauble toy away, fell to prayerful reading of the word. But still he hardened his stiff neck and resolutely followed his vain pursuit, *knowing it to be vain* and that which God had stamped with a curse: and it was *this* that made the study *to him* to be sin. (James iv. 17.) Thus as the "backsliding heifer," he slid back again into his former state of sinful folly as did Israel of old. (Hosea iv. 16.)

Health restored, it became needful for him to return to business again. He went to his former situation but it was filled up, and the door of readmittance into the same line of business closed. God had otherwise determined of his disposal; thus granting him the desires of his heart upon that distressing point. Now, mysterious to relate, another door was opened in quite a different branch of commerce, and that in a country town; here in a concern of extensive business he went in 1838, where all was strange and new. Finding favour in the eyes of the wealthy and benevolent proprietors, he was taken into their office, and treated with a never-to-be-forgotten kindness.

The house allotted him for a residence, was surrounded by fields. What a temptation! Emerald green fields, sparkling in a bright summer sun, their beauty heightened by the clear blue sky of June. What a change from dirty streets, a dense atmosphere, and a beclouded sun—agreeable remove to a painter's mind, from black chimnies, smoky slates, and sooty tiles; to mountain flocks, the herds on distant hills, the clean and rural cottage of the poor. Could he withstand it? no, his heart was there already—the idol had been worshipped already; for like the men of Ashdod, he had taken up his fallen dagon and set him in his place as before: and the eyes had again lustingly looked up to the hills of his sinful elevation. Therefore this was the very thing that he wanted; to be freed from

“The noisy haunts of bustling trade

that he might

Steal serene to solitude and shade.”

And thus the next step was an easy one. When an altar is once reared unto sin, unless God in mercy prevent, it is an easy thing to sacrifice thereon. Forbidden things once desired, want but little persuasion from the devil to induce us to partake of them. Therefore, having visited the idol's shrine, mixed himself with heathen abominations, and again been captivated with arts' talismanic harm; the Lord God drove him out of that spiritual Eden—his presence—when he smote the *colter as he did Ephraim*, and said in his wrath,

"he is joined to idols, let him alone." "Wasting and destruction shall be within his borders, until the indignation of the Lord is overpast." "He shall wait for light but behold obscurity; for brightness but he shall walk in darkness." Therefore, "Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee, (if it can), and walk in the ways of thine heart, (if thou wilt), and in the sight of thine eyes, (if thou desirest it), but know thou that for all these things, God shall bring thee into *judgment*."

"Prevent he could, if wisdom had seen fit,
But wisdom saw it wiser to permit."

The image, therefore, was again set up on the high place of the heart, when the easel with all the requisite materials for drawing and painting, were removed to his residence in the country. How persevering is the flesh in its determination to sin and rebel. To render due homage to this idol of worship, substituted by the flesh in the place of the true God, (of whom nature cannot bear to retain the knowledge) now became as before, the absorbent desire of the heart. But alas, the spoiling nature of his philosophy soon became apparent; and the bright element of sunny seasons in the country, proved how insufficient was the most seemingly rational desire, and apparently virtuous practice, to procure happiness to the child of grace. Walking abroad to scan the fair beauties of creation, on the glad enlivened face of nature shone a brightness not portrayed

in his. For on his eyelids there was sorrow, whilst bitterness filled the heart. The mind was fettered by the clogging trammels of a corroding care; busied with the anxious pleasure of a worldly art; the procurer only of sorrow to the soul.

February 24, 1840. Recorded.—"Finished a picture upon which I have bestowed an unusual degree of pains, but it has all proved labour in vain, for I find that I cannot paint—*God will not let me.*"

Be it observed, the heart meant no decided hostility to the God of heaven, but simply wished for the quiet and unmolested enjoyment of its flesh gratifying propensities. But such indulgence was found to be unlawful and opposed to the will and word of God; therefore, God opposed himself to it. A sinning soul is in the sliding scale of *death*. "To be spiritually minded is *life* and peace."

Now about this time a younger sister whose heart was tuned to praise, came down from town to see him, when the summer evenings were beguiled in the happy pastime of walking in the fields, and alternately repeating their soul exercises in some sweet lines of poetry, or suitable passages of scripture. Each one would vie with the other in the allowed emulation of singing loudest to the Redeemer's praise; thus nourishing one another in the words of faith and of God, as far as they had attained thereunto. But ah, *this* only heightened the misery of after days *when the same walks* were taken alone, and he

began to experience the sensible fulfillment of God's righteous denunciation against his sin. The "Sketch Book" was then his companion and the time employed in studying the works of nature, rather than the profitable exercise of the soul unto God and godliness, which alone is useful unto edification, and ministers grace to the heart. The contrast of his then slavish service, with the late happy occupation in heavenly themes, would cause the soul to pine away in sorrow, when its songs would be turned into lamentation, its laughter into mourning, and its joy to weeping.

But the subtlety of the deceiving and deceived heart, would fain support the idea, that such an intellectual pursuit was harmless, innocent, and wise: that the study of *nature* was not to be numbered with the "pleasures of sin;" but leading to nature's God, it could not be offensive to him; and that it might therefore be followed as a delightful recreation for an intelligent being; an innocent amusement, a justifiable pursuit, a pleasing and agreeable trifling; but no,

" True Christians long for Christ *alone*
The sacrifices God will own
Are broken—not *divided* hearts."

It is true many professing christians indulge in such fleshly fascinations, excusing themselves by the supposed idea, that

" Religion never was design'd
To make our pleasures less."

But the writer knows to the contrary—that,

that is the very thing it is designed to do ; and not only to make them "*less*," but "*loss*," for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. If our pleasures are not spiritual, they are carnal ; and what fleshly gratification is not sinful ? Religion, if of God, will lessen our enjoyment of every thing but what comes from, or leads to God. Our pleasures are *always* "pleasures of sin," if God cannot *delight in them* as well as us. The sanctified soul can find profitable enjoyment *only* in those things which are at God's right hand ; that is, in Christ Jesus, who is emphatically called the right hand of God. (Psalm xx. 6, 7.) Nor can the believer find out the ways of pleasantness, or tread in the paths of peace, but as he walks by the light, sown for the righteous, which shines in the path of the just, and worthy of his high and holy calling of God in Christ Jesus, in what he delights, in what he approves, in what he enjoins, in what he demands. For as the Father's supreme delight centres in the Son of his love, in whom he is "well pleased," so also must ours.

Now after a few years of lonely wanderings, suffering much from the loss of the spiritual and highly prized ministry of the metropolis, a counteracting pleasure to painting presented itself in a voluminous correspondence with a younger brother, which, though began in scientific frivolities, the press of weightier matters on the mind, led their pens into the more profitable channel of christian *communication*. A few specimens *received* shall suffice.

"Dear J.—I join you in the wish for as little of this world as possible; for what are its vanities and pleasures, compared with the enjoyment of communion with a precious Christ.

"The more the dear children of God have of spiritual things, the less they want of things terene; and the less they want, the less they have.

"If mortals are proud of their relationship to royalty, surely it ought to be a source of continual joy and rejoicing to the elect family of God, that they are related in covenant bonds to the Royal of royals."

Then the rising desires of his youthful heart would be expressed in rhyme thus:—

"And is there mercy, Lord, for me?
Can I be sav'd by grace?
Can there a sacred promise be?
To suit my guilty case.

Wilt thou in kind compassion heal,
This wounded heart of mine?
O, how unworthy do I feel,
To be a child of thine.

Upon me thy sweet Spirit pour,
For I am weak indeed;
Give grace from thy rich cov'nant store,
To one who *feels his need*."

G. C.

But surely no one could feel his need or unworthiness, more than the backsliding writer, who having "tasted that the Lord is gracious," *yea, feasted upon the rich provision of Zion, was now*

partaking of the "unclean things of Assyria," and defiling himself with the abominations of the heathen; like Israel of old, having "cast off the thing that is good," and committed their two evils—*forsaking God* and *serving sin*, he was brought into their wilderness troubles, and suffered their wilderness trials. How wonderful it is that so little warning is taken from *their* example, left upon record for Zion's especial use and benefit. A lamentable evidence of the weakness and wickedness of the "creature," reduced to the degradation of a miserable sinner, who doeth evil an hundred times in succession. (Eccle. viii. 12.) But as it was, so it is, and will doubtless continue to the end of time.

1st. There is a doing that which is evil in the sight of the Lord. (Judges ii. 11.)

2nd. A going into captivity on account thereof. (Lamentations i. 3.)

3rd. The cry being made unto the Lord for deliverance. (Neh. ix. 17.)

4th, The prophet, (Mal. iv. 5, 6); Preacher, (Isa. lxi. 1); Circumstance, (Psalm cv. 17); or eventful thing, (Esther vii. 3, 4) sent to effect it.

The secret contained herein, as sweetly sets forth the Lord Jesus Christ in the old covenant, as his miracles of healing do in the new. The reader is, therefore, advised to lay *this book* aside for the present, and betake himself to the word of God, and his own heart. A diligent search after *his secret* may not be unprofitable and vain.

W. A. H.

Now thus it was with the writer, no sooner had the first beaten pulse of the "weaned child" taken place, and ere the threshold of his heavenly Father's house was crossed, than the devil "lying in wait to deceive," bewitched him into disobedience; when he went forth as "the wild asses of the desert," that "snuff up wind," (verily a wild ass man of unruly passions) to seek the empty vanities of the world and gather the "the vintage fruits of the wicked." "Falling by his iniquity," which separated between him and his God, "in his distress he cried unto the Lord." But for an "appointed season" he made *darkness* his secret place, and dwelt in the thick clouds of the skies. Then said the soul, struggling in the meshes of sin's inextricable web, "I am the man that hath seen affliction, for God hath set me the hard lesson to learn, of righteousness by tribulation, and wisdom by suffering. Yea, he hath set me in dark places as those that be dead; he hath hedged me about that I cannot get out, and made my chain very heavy." Ah, the writer found it no small matter to sin against God; and, especially is it an evil and bitter thing to sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth. What a mercy if the assurance of existing life is maintained by the secret pouring in of the sustaining oil; so that the sin hated at heart, is lamented within, mourned over *before God*; and the prayer for deliverance therefrom, *for Christ's sake* being constantly put up. These are evidences in thy favour poor soul, for "the wicked are silent in darkness."

Now it was this abiding sense of the love and faithfulness of God that sustained the backslider's soul; whom, though walking in darkness, it was not as the dense thickness of a destructible plague. God caused the lamp of his word still to burn, which though but little realized in its reviving power, was as a light in the path. But it was a way not marked out by God in the wilderness; therefore, he walked more by the borrowed light of a letter truth, than the brightness which shines on the word revealed. It was with him in the spiritual world, as it is with men in the natural; "God maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and the good: and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust." Thus equally with God's chosen, he was the subject of his superintending care, and the object of his superabounding love; though the misery of his guilty conscience shut him up in a state of senseless nullity, as the spiritual apprehension of such mercies. "Spoilt through philosophy," he was fully to learn the lesson of his weakness as well as his wickedness; and his unworthiness as well as his depravity; that having turned aside through a deceived heart to feed upon ashes, instead of that undiminishable food of permanent sweetness, *the true manna of heaven*; he had now gone into captivity and could not deliver his soul. Bound and chained by the fetters of his sin, there was daily sacrifice done to his "net," and incense burnt unto his "drag:" a following after the wearying foolishness of a waking dream, and pursuing the visionary delights of an

ever evading phantom. And this habitual evil of his heart became the constant plague of his life, intruding itself as it did into the mind at all times and under all circumstances. Even the hasty glance at a meritorious picture would upset him for days, filling his agitated brain with a thousand thoughts, *not one of God*, but such as belonged exclusively to "art." The composition—the drawing—the style—the colouring—the clever concealment of pigment materials—the dexterity of handling—the sunny effect—the sombre tone—the sylvan shade—each had their quantum of attention commensurate with their importance; so that he was completely "choked" with the cares of a worldly art; and thus disabled for christian usefulness in anything, and disqualified for the spiritual enjoyment of everything. "Spoiled through philosophy."*

* "SPOILT THROUGH PHILOSOPHY."

(COLOS. II. 8.)

DAYS of my youth! ah, how my heart did cling,
Like ivy round the oak, entwining thing:
How true a pattern dost thou shew of me,
Cleaving to sin—but not, O Lord, to thee.

As born deprav'd, deprav'd I wish'd to live,
Vainly supposing Art could virtue give:
And nature, grace: that science could supply
True happiness, which only dwells on high.

Nature! to thee I did strict homage pay,
And bow obedience to Art's magic sway.
Science and fame! O how thy sil'ry cord
Did bind my soul—but not in love to God.

Indeed so familiar did the sinful fondling grow, that as Solomon's libidinous love, *he could not give it up*. It became as part of his nature; it clung to him as ivy to the oak; intruded itself into every thought, and stunted the growth of every spiritual desire. Not a cloud was seen even in the common look of carelessness, but the mind attracted by the magnetic powers of that which is beautiful and grand in nature, at once studiously entered into a bewitching analysis of its peculiar form and varied tint: not a tree was passed in the simple walk of daily life, but it must be viewed in its several bearings for pictorial use: the herd of cows—the flock of sheep—the group of men; were all made to serve the purposes of art; whilst

Canvass and colours thou the idols were,
That kept my captive soul enchanted there;
My labour'd works of thought became the god
Of constant worship; not the rightful Lord.

Art's syren drew me to Minerva's shrine,
Where fancy pictur'd "mind to be divine:"
Inspir'd pride, the life of youthful blood
Fir'd my soul with zeal—but not for God.

Ah, how for years these phantoms I pursued,
Building my hopes on fame's destructive good:
Ambition fann'd enthusiasm's flame,
I honours sought—but not in Jesu's name.

Thus did "philosophy and vain deceit,"
Enslave my soul, and "spoil" me with its cheat:
Till God, who seeing I would not seek him,
Sought me—and thus he saved me from my sin.

Re-printed from "Zion's Trumpet."

light and shade; form and order; tone and colour; were taken into the account at every sight of nature whenever or wherever presented to view. Indeed, it became as natural to associate things seen with their representation on canvass, as it did to breathe. What a lamentable fulfilment of scripture prediction is here, which says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his *own* ways." Yes they were peculiarly his own, "not after God, not after God;" for God had made man upright, but *he* hath sought out many inventions. And so was the writer filled with his own devices, through constantly eating the "fruit of his own ways;" that at times there was even a "loathing the honeycomb." The soul was then as unfruitful and leafless as the forsaken bough. No sweetness in the sacred book of God; nor unction, savour, or power in the preached word of God. No nearness to him in prayer, or approaching unto peace with him in communion with his people; the soul became as barren and unprofitable as the mountains of Gilboa. Darkness of mind and deadness of soul are the sure concomitants of disobedience: for as natural death was the sentence of judgment against idolaters under the law, (Deut. xvii. 3 and 5) spiritual death is the portion of the like carnally-minded under the gospel. And thus it was with him, such was his stupified position before God when bringing forth fruit unto death, that he suffered an entire prostration of all the powers of spiritual life: drunk *with the inebriating "pleasures of sin,"* and stal-

pified by the intoxicating joys of the world. And in this way he passed years, "inflaming himself with idols under every green tree;" separate from the assembly of saints and faithful brethren in Christ—"let alone" by God, engaged in the service of the Devil.

At length it pleased him whose "mercy endureth for ever," and who, notwithstanding the treacherous dealing of Israel with him, had said, that he "hateth putting away," to begin severely correcting his self-willed child for these follies of youth. God never suffers idolatry in his people to go unpunished. To me, he says, vengeance belongeth to recompence, but in wrath I remember mercy. Therefore I, even I am he, whom though I kill it is to make alive; I wound, but it is to heal. God spares by slaying and preserves by afflicting. He destroys not Israel in the wrath of his will, though he slays his people by the word of his mouth; (Hosea vi. 5), and this he now began to do.

On an occasion when the mind had comprehended a subject for the canvass, and the artists' repository was resorted to, to purchase a fresh supply of colours and brushes, God hewed him by these words of the prophet, "Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not *bread*?"*

* Of course the "bread of life," or "true manna," which cometh down from above, and is to be had "without money and without price," is not here intended; but *simply the supply of such things as tend to nourish the soul, in contradistinction to that which tends to im-*

This completely slew the well-set subject for the time ; and was ever afterwards a sharp and powerful word of reproof at every repeated instance of purchase. But, through a heart of folly set in great dignity of vanity and pride, he would still pursue the contemplated thoughts of his mind, stopping the ears, and refusing to hearken to the voice from heaven, *so as to be instructed thereby*. Arriving at home, and setting down to the easel, to carry out the pictorial creations of his vain imagination, the other half of the verse would come upon him like the thunder clap that follows the lightnings flash, "and your labour for that which satisfieth not." This would effectually overthrow the altar and the god, coming to him as it did, from the "God of gods;" who led him seriously to contemplate the unsatisfying nature of his pursuit. He would then ask himself, How can that which is "*not after God*" yield peaceable fruits to the soul that is born *of God*? What fruit have ye in those things, wherein, upon reflection, thou art ashamed?* Yes, all labour in the vain and perishing things of this world, is unsatisfying and profitless to the child of God. Therefore, well may the preacher ask, "What profit hath a man (of God) of all the labour which *he* taketh under the sun." To the writer it yielded

verish it. And, therefore, the word "bread" is here used spiritually, to signify, all kinds of food for the soul, as it is naturally in Genesis iii. 19; to all kinds of food for the body.

* Perhaps these questions may do the reader no harm

nothing but sorrow of heart and grievous vexation of spirit. For the work of his hands and the labour with which he wrought, was grievous unto him. "Vanity of vanities," was the impression from God's seal of disapprobation stamped on the idol of his heart. The answer, therefore, to the question, "What profiteth the graven (or painted) image, which the hand hath graven (or painted;) would be,—like the rest of the perishing productions of man, "the image is profitable for nothing."

In addition to such discoveries, God with a touch of his finger, turned the little affairs of life to his purpose of teaching, that he might give lessons of instruction to his unlearned and unstable child : so determined is he in his predestinating purpose, that "all things" shall render their subservient homage to his will, in the working of that which is "good" to his people. That may be, and often is, the very opposite in appearance, to what God designs in reality. The soul is often one with Job, when he said, "I looked for good, but evil came unto me;" whereas the apparent evil may be designed of God for the souls' good. Thus daily occurrences and the common circumstances of life were employed by God to mar the writer's pleasure in his delectable pursuit. The thing persisted in, contrary to the will of God, was continually being checked by the counter course of *events*, wisely arranged of the Lord, both to wean *the soul from its besetments*, and to vex it with *sorrow in its bewitchments*. There was that con-

nected with his vain pursuit which proved constant sources of annoyance. One instance shall suffice. The judgment, in matters pertaining to art, growing faster than the powers of execution, (through lack of sufficient practice) there was an inability to represent on canvass, that which was clearly seen in the mind. This ever made him rise from the easel, dissatisfied with his production; vexed with his waste of materials and loss of time; and disappointed in his expectations. How wisely ordered. But so it pleased God, that in some way or other he should be doomed to disappointment, at every attempt to obtain peace and happiness from this quarter. The *work* of God, or the *word* of God would invariably hinder or reprove. He once went over the sea to Boulogne, on a sketching adventure, but the religious mummeries of popish France so met him at every turning, that his heart's "Dagon" fell before the vast importance which it then increasingly appeared to be, of having for himself a well-grounded hope of salvation *by Jesus Christ*. Their awful fooleries, led him to reflect upon the follies of his own heart. Then rain would frequently overtake him in his picture making rambles, and render his lugged about materials useless, or God would hedge up his path and damp his pleasure by illness. Indeed, he never had *one* hour's unmolested enjoyment in the art, since God first called him by his grace; there was always either an east wind to wither his gourd, or a worm at the root to destroy it, so that it afforded neither a shelter in the hour of

soul desertion, nor a refuge in the time of soul destitution.

At length he began to be so full of his "own ways" as to be completely "surfeited" with those things which in the world were his glory, but in truth was his shame. Indeed he became like the Israelites who having loathed the manna and lusted for flesh, eat it until it came out at their nostrils. (Numbers xi. 20.) And he suffered "*confusion*" before God in his soul, (as all makers of idols in Israel do. Isaiah xlv. 16;) and as the Psalmist has said, "*Confounded* be all they that serve graven images, that boasts themselves of idols." This he had done to his hurt, to his cost, and the bitter reproachings of his conscience, in seeking the honours of a vain world, and the applause of sinful men. Till he, who had said, "my glory will I not give unto another, nor my praise to graven images," arose as a "man of war," and stirred up jealousy in the soul; that godly jealousy for the honour of the holy name by which he was called, that ever leads to self-examination, watchfulness, and prayer. Then he sought him by supplication whom his soul loved and longed for; and sighed in his captivity for a return of those happy days when he first walked in the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free; and "free among the dead," with loosened bonds and a liberated tongue, sang as he went out of Egypt the high praises of God and the *Lamb*. But now in "bondage through corruption," his soul did indeed "groan being bur-

dened ;" and was in heaviness through the manifold temptations of his besetting sin. Nor could he sing the " Lord's song" in a strange land, the language of his weeping heart being expressed in lamentation and longing thus,

" Happiness—thou lovely name,
Where's thy seat, O tell me where ?
Learning—pleasure—wealth and *fame*,
All cry out—it is not here.
Not the wisdom of the wise,
Can inform me where it lies ;
Not the grandeur of the great,
Can the bliss I seek, create ;
Object of my first—*desire*,
Jesus crucified for me," &c.

Yes, this was what he wanted, to be brought back again to the starting point—to the first pure desire of the quickened soul, realized in a felt sense of pardon through the blood of him who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. He wanted to feel clothed before God in the righteousness of his Son, which is the blessed privilege granted the soul seeking *first* " the kingdom of God." Yea, he wanted to regain the happy bliss that dwells in the bosom of Jesus, and to realize the enjoyment of peace, flowing from an expression of his love. For he found it was even as a dear sister wrote to him at this time, when she said, " I feel persuaded, dear brother, more and more each day, that there is no true happiness short of living by faith on a precious Christ." No, the writer had lived to prove this ; that

“ Not health nor wealth, nor sounding *fame*,
Nor earth's deceitful empty name ;
With all its pomp and all its glare,
Could with a *precious Christ* compare.”

Nor was the comparison only made between worldly things and Christ, but he was led to compare his worldly self with *Christians* ; when measuring himself according to the measure of the rule which God had distributed among the people of his, by whom he was surrounded, his miserable condition compared with theirs, became heart-rendingly conspicuous. The indigent man seemed pure in his poverty ; and the unlettered man wise in his ignorance, whilst the contaminated, polluted, spoiled writer, was (scripturally) a fool with his philosophy, and reduced to beggary with his profitless riches. But, blessed be God, with poverty of spirit there was sorrow of heart on its account ; and, therefore, he essentially differed from the wickedly rich man—who “ *fades away* (not *falls down* before God) in his riches.” Then, O the longings of the smitten, and, therefore, wounded soul, to live in the *simplicity* of the gospel of Christ ; to return again unto the Lord and be taught of him, having gone out from his presence into a far country, and spent the bounty money of his inheritance in the riotous luxury of worldly living.

The prodigal then thought of taking with him pleading words, (Isa. xlii. 26), founded upon promise, (Isa. i. 18,) and returning to his Father's house, finding husks would not feed him, nor

earnal food satisfy him. He hungered for that stay and that staff of life provided for the soul to preserve it from spiritual death; that eating Christ (John vi. 57,) the true bread, and drinking from the fountain of everflowing waters, he might live by him unto God.

True happiness derivable from him, the enriching treasures deposited in him, and that heavenly wisdom only taught by him, became prominent objects of research. To be spiritually healthy, soul prosperously wealthy, and wise with the wisdom of God.

Nor was it long before the citadel of Satan erected on the throne of the heart, now assailed by the simple force of a heavenward desire, seemingly a thing of nought, as the "pitcher and the lamp," and small as the grain of mustard seed faith, began to shake at the foundation as that which is built in the dust. And God mercifully added thereto—hope, that timely grace amongst his "good and perfect gifts"; which enlivened the soul unto a spiritual apprehension of the promise, "*The desire of the righteous shall be granted.*" His task then was to prove himself by the understanding given to know him that is true, even truth itself, "the Lord our righteousness," and to examine the deeds of description, even the records of truth for the "sure word," **RIGHTEOUS** in the sight of God, and this in the face of all his rebellion, idolatry, and sin. Then came Jesus to the rescue and stood in the sinner's stead; and it was to the soul, as if he pleaded the cause of the guilty one

before God, saying unto him "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom thou madest strong for thyself." Precious intercessor, and all prevailing "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ *the righteous*."

Thus God allowed him to glean in the field of truth when he gathered a few ears of the "corn of heaven" for the soul; for his 'hap' was to light upon that part of the field, that was signalized as the peculiar possession of his heavenly Boaz. The former "loving-kindnesses of the Lord," the time of the transfer of guilt, and first transaction of peace, was then somewhat restored; and the glad remembrance of his once deadness to the dear sin of his heart now enlivened him with the hope of its final destruction. Merciful expression of God's unchanging love, though the enjoyment was of short duration, the soul being still held in bondage under the elements of the world. But it was just a sight granted, and taste given, of the gracious goodness of the Lord, lest the soul holden in cords of affliction should be swallowed up with over much sorrow.

Moreover, it established itself as the work of the Lord's hands, for the darling "art" became for a season, little esteemed; and grace did reign instead of his graceless god. Rejoicing in this first effectual shaking of the standing image, the pen recorded in 'his diary' the following important fact, "May 5, 1841. Painting, the long cherished *idol of my heart*, seems now to have lost its spell of *enchantment*, and the much endeared habit of

"sketching from nature" is almost laid aside, Indeed, the claims of God upon my time, my thoughts, my heart, my all, are much too great to allow me to be wasted and destroyed by sin in the unlawful gratification of the pleasures of sense, which are but for a season; rather let me take sketches of my soul's experience in the realities of divine teaching, and picture the scenes of beauty, grace, and love, that present themselves in the garden of the Lord."

Ah, how fully did he then think, that the desire for artistic precedency, and the wish to excel in scenic representation had died away; and that he was made proof against the power of its temptation, by the occasional visits of his "Beloved." But such was not the case—the harp had again to be hung upon the willows with weeping, and the soul to struggle in the entanglings of the fowler's snare. The very month in which the foregoing memorandum was penned, did not pass without a sorry proof that the long cherished idol had not, as was supposed, lost its spell of enchantment, but that the voice of lamentation had still to utter the cry, "how long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart *daily*?" Witness the following, only three weeks afterwards.—

"*May 25, 1841.* Took the palette in hand once more and assiduously worked at a picture. I find I am still more *active* in other pursuits than those which alone are profitable to the soul. The pleasure of serving "divers lusts" has a power of

temptation too strong to be withstood, when the presence of Jesus is not sensibly felt and enjoyed. O, when will these trifles of time be little esteemed, and Jesus become the *altogether* lovely one, and *only* charmer of my soul."

Now about this time, marriage, and its fruitful blessings, became the all absorbing subject, and which tended much to deaden the influence of the attractive art, though it added nothing to its real destruction: domestic anxieties though they drew his mind away from one sort of pursuit, it was only to invest his heart in another. Still the hope was entertained that now he had *become a man*, he should put away childish things.* But when the hey day of matrimony was over, Art, phoenix-like, rose again from its own ashes to assert its *prior* claims, and pictures were painted, as *for the children*. Then God sent a messenger to reprove him, who by a severe epistolary correspondence† of great depth and of long continuance, with now and then a personal visit, had a searching and beneficial effect upon him. God was pleased to make this honoured servant of his, ere he departed hence, a most powerful weapon to cut

* What ignorance to suppose that at the period of manhood, men put away childish things. Alas, it too often happens, that men to the day of their death, are but "children of a larger growth," and how frequently may it be seen that childhood reaches to three score years and ten. Childish things are *never* put away but by the grace of God.

† See "*Wilderness Mercies* ; Letter XIX. page 103. A book published in 1846 by W. Bennett, Paternoster Row.

off the writer's hopes and dependances from any other foundation than that laid in Zion, namely, Jesus Christ. Few individuals apart from the ministerial office, are privileged to be made so great a blessing to a weak and wavering brother.

(*Diary Records.*)—"Went to the private opening of an 'organ,' where was an assemblage of those great men of music, who led the taste of the public mind. Surrounded by the motley group who were musing on the mystery of sounds, with that enchanted delirium peculiar to men of intellect and genius; the writer recalled to mind the delusion of former days when he also was led astray by the luxury of musical enchantment; and in the vanity of his mind, was "puffed up" with the pride of preferment amongst men. O, how out of place did he now feel; and yet suffering an agony of fleshly struggles, for enjoyment on the delectable occasion, for it was indeed a rich repast, to those who do not know a richer. The contest with the spirit was sharp and severe, but the flesh was obliged to give way."

"October 27, 1842.—Was solicited to become member of a "Conversational Society," to discuss matters relating to the fine arts, painting, music, &c. Could not join them; the mind has undergone a wonderful change of late, and the importance of living separate from the world, as well as professing to be such, sensibly felt. A solid foundation had been laid in the righteous desire for those spiritual gifts, sobriety and circumspection, that I might so live as to adorn, and not

disgrace, the gospel of God my Saviour in all things. O, that "for me to live may be Christ, and that by him the world may be crucified to me and I unto the world." Lord, what a blank is life without thee; for what *am I, and what is my life*. To me it seems but one continuous act of sin and rebellion, beholding as I do the multiplying iniquities of my heart, in the daily transactions of life. O that thou wouldst loosen my bonds and set me free.

"Speak O Lord, my kind release,
A poor backsliding soul restore:
Love me freely, seal my peace;
And let me rove from thee no more."

"August 30, 1843.—Accompanied a sister to the Society of British Artists' Exhibition, London, but did not care to see any of the pictures. Indeed, I quite sickened at the sight of those things that had been my stumbling-block and snare. And I thought—delightful as it may appear to gaze upon the gay variety of colours so ingeniously blended together in a picture, 'tis after all mere trickery—a delusion of the pencil—and the gratification, a dying pleasure." But the *thought* came not with sufficient power to enable him to give it up, and cast the foolish things aside.—These were still held with one hand, though not grasped as heretofore, in nature's lustful rapacity with "both hands greedily." Loosened from the first infirmity of a *willing* mind unto sin, the inward homage rendered to the idol was rather by *fleshly constraint* than from pleasurable purpose.

For whilst the lamentation was "my soul cleaveth unto the dust;" the prayer was "Quicken thou me, O God, according to the word."

Now acquaintance with the last-named brother in the Lord, brought him into close connexion with many highly favoured in the family of God. Frequent communications and occasional meetings with these, led him to consider how small were his attainments, and slow the growth of his soul, during the seven years he had been born of God. For though there was an occasional rising above the vain and perishing things of time and sense, there was no such thing as a reckoning himself "dead indeed unto sin" by the body of Christ. Neither was there any continuance in those things he had learned of him, nor an abiding in those of which he had been assured. Spoilt through philosophy, he was a true Reubenite in Zion; unstable as water, he could not excel, and as the babe in grace, so unskilful in the word of righteousness, he could not read or say 'Shibboleth.' Shut up in the darkness of a way that is not good, light was but as the glimmerings of a dim and dying candle; life, like the spark of an almost extinguished ember. Here much tribulation and anguish arose; and God laid the matter with a solemn weight upon the soul, which led him to ask, "Is there not a cause?" and also to ponder well the path he was treading, and to establish (if he could) the way he was going in the sight of the Lord. And the word of exhortation was "Remove thy foot from evil, for as righteousness

tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." A curse (says God) causeless shall not come. Ah, it was an important period in the soul's experience, when the end of Arts perfection* was drawing to a close, and the infinite evil of his pursuit began to appear in its true and proper light, as contrary to the will of God, in the way of approach unto God, and the productive source of sorrow instead of rejoicing to the people of God. (2 Cor. ii. 3.) Then was put up the most earnest fervent prayer in the true sincerity of his heart, to be delivered from that philosophy which had spoilt him, and to be rescued from that power which had overcome him.

In proof the dark and barren state of his soul, buried in Art's philosophical heap of dross and tin; witness the following extracts from letters received from the before-mentioned faithful friend and brother:—

* * * *

"Your epistle received this morning fully convinces me, how barren your soul is at this time; for had the sweet dews of heaven rested upon your mind and spirit when you penned it, there would not have been such a lack of divine savour in the epistle, as I found there to be *in the reading*. Lack a day, it was as light as the foam upon the waters: and dare you say to the contrary in the presence of him who weighs the same and finds it light as air.

* Not its practice—that was unhappily persisted in five years after this.

"It is easy to jump to conclusions, but not so to *prove* the love, the grace, the power, and the communion of the truth upon our hearts, *when we write about it*. I believe you to be a child of God, but like Jonah, "asleep in the ship;" and at present, the storm, the rebuke, the lashing surges and waves of the great deep, have not overtaken you.—June 26, 1843."

The next epistle commenced at follows:—

* * * *

"When last I wrote, I felt a little provoked with you; but then remember and believe me, I do think it was a righteous indignation,* *from the effect it had upon me*; causing me to carry your weakness *with my own* to the throne. And I know, and am sure, that in all my acquaintance with you, it hath been to study your welfare; and nothing would delight me more than to behold your growth in spiritual knowledge, and to see you progress from your babyism to a young man, and so at length to become a "father in Christ."

"Essex, July 7, 1843.

"J. G."

Now it was our writer's mercy to be enabled to esteem him as his *best* friend, who would tell him of his faults and failings. (Prov. xxvii. 9.) This plain dealing, therefore, was highly prized, and he had wisdom given him to say "faithful are

* 'Provoked with a righteous indignation.' This is that sinless anger allowed by God in defence of his honour and glory. (Connect with Ephes. iv. 26; Exod. xxxii. 19.)

the wounds of a friend." We may depend upon it, that man is our *real* friend, who being grieved for our affliction, and cannot bear to see a stain upon his brother's garment, gives him the wholesome and honest *reproof of his heart*. Though many count it "bitter, censorious, and severe;" mine be the privilege of deriving soul profit from that "sharpness of speech" which the Lord gives unto some, and tends to edification, not destruction. From all polite letter writers and smooth sycophant speakers, the Lord deliver me. To be praised *in Christ* is the only commendation that may be passed on a believer, for it is in him alone that he stands accepted and approved of God; and as such, is one whom "the Lord commendeth." Fleshly adulation is but sinful compliment, and only commendeth in the devil. It is a great Christian secret, to learn how to forgive our offending friend four hundred and ninety times,* and still to admonish him *as a brother*. But to return to the time when the secret purpose of God in the manifestation of his Son was being opened up, namely, that he might destroy the works of the devil; there was in connexion with such revelation, an associating the evil works of his hands (being so destroyed) *with the devil*. O, what a soul shuddering idea. Then was the importunate prayer put up for the "whole armour of God" that he might be able to stand against his wiles.

* *The scriptural standard—seventy times seven (Matt. xviii. 22) implying illimitation.*

"*May 1st.*—The day for the opening the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy of Painting; considered once the most important event in the year." Ah, how many times, with hurried step and anxious thought, has he repaired to this great temple of science; and impatiently waited outside the door, with hundreds of arts' deluded votaries for the hour of admittance, then madly rushed up the vestibule steps to catch the first glad sight of some great R.A.'s* work. Alas, how tardy the steps to the house of God; and how long may the doors of the sanctuary be seen open before the zeal of the Christian prompts him to be there. The sight of persons rushing to places of worldly amusement may often be witnessed, but who in our day ever saw two disciples *running* to the house of God to see which could get there first. (John xx. 4.)

But the day in question, once surrounded by a bright halo of delights, was now sunk into the shades of night; when its importance crumbled into nothingness, as the insignificant thing of yesterday. "O how I do bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he has given me other objects to view, (delightful to the spiritual eyes) and other subjects to study, (glorious in joys to the soul) than the flesh pleasing gratification of the senses, which once so absorbed my attention and captivated my heart. I trust I do know better now than to waste my precious time in pursuits which are neither lawful or expedient."

* Royal Academician.

Yes, the heart was sensible of its defects, but this only added weight to the already intolerable burden of a guilty conscience. For to him that *knoweth* his master's will and doeth it not, it is sin: it is sin in more ways than one. Now the writer had proved this, to his own soul's cost; and yet continued the practice. He hated every foe in his heart, and yet enemies were the best fed in his household. That which was opposed to God he despised, and yet joined himself in league with the opposition. This is the mystery of sinning in the believer: he is the special subject of that anomaly, "when I would do good, evil is present with me." He loves by nature, what he hates by grace. And thus it was with the writer, he delighted in the "law of God after the inward man;" yet being in captivity to the "law of sin" which was in his members, he practised evil in the presence of good. Nevertheless, he said with Paul, "though with my flesh I serve the law of sin," yet, "that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not, but **WHAT I HATE** that I do." What a merciful expression for the soul's *relief* (not excuse) has God allowed to be recorded in the following—"If I do that I **WOULD NOT**, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. vii. 20). And again, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from **ALL** sin"—the sin we would do and the sin we would not do.

Now this hatred increased as the fact was revealed, *that in science* (falsely so called) there

was opposition—opposition to God; to the will of God; the word of God; the work of God; the way of God; and being one of the “wise things” of this world,—to the wisdom of God. That as it was “not after God,” it must be *after the devil*. Solemn and awful thought to one who had professed before men to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as such to have turned his back upon Satan; but alas, when the soul gets into bad company, it shakes hands with the devil himself in the crowd. Then for the better security of the soul against the elementary evils of the world, God led him into the “chambers of imagery,” and showed him the secret of those things done in the dark, revealing unto him some of the abominations attached to the polite arts, painting, poetry, and music. This he did to grieve him as he did Peter (John xxi. 17) on the one hand, and that his righteous soul might be vexed as was Lot’s (2 Peter ii. 7) on the other. He first opened his eyes to the fact, that the works of the “Old Masters,” to which he was particularly attached, were the productions of heathens, idolaters, and Roman catholics, the avowed enemies of God and truth. Could he bear this? with the fear of God before his eyes, could he call these his companions and friends? Could he think of travelling the journey of life with those, of whom he was taught of God to say “I count them my enemies.” Could he frequent their chambers of death, and call those his guests who were in the depths of hell? Could this be called separation from the world, and sanctifica-

tion unto the Lord? The soul paused at a revelation of these things and wept very sore.

The mind was then led to look upon the public exhibitions as being to him the great temples of idolatry; and to view the heart entering into a bewitching study (as had been frequently done) of the various works therein displayed, with a painter like spirit, to be rendering idolatrous worship. Could he bear this? In the heights of his intellectuality to be put on a level with ignorant Brahmins! In the soundness of his theology to be classed with the sinful errors of idolatrous papists? nay, in the spirituality of his mind, to be a heathen in his practice? Could this be anything like the sanctified soul's sacred reverence of its God? Alas, was it not rather worshipping the work of men's hands, that which their own fingers had made? The soul recoiled at this idea; and asked itself, "what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? or what concord could there be betwixt Christ and Belial." This also was seen to be a grievous evil, and which suffused the soul in tears.

The next aspect in which painting was beheld; was in its religious garb; adorned in the seemingly clean vestments of natural piety and fleshly virtue, *Rafaëlle*, because he painted well, was termed "the divine," as if he inspired divine feelings into the hearts of those who contemplated his works. Ah, said Sir P. P. Rubens on his death *bed*, *with a zeal for God but not according to knowledge*—"We (noble army of painters) are

all going to heaven, and Vandyke is of the party." The writer was not so sure of that, at any rate he knew *he* could not get there without a Mediator, of whom no mention was made by the knight. But so it is with all self-righteous philosophers and religious fanatics: the painter, in the extravagance of his pious fancy, thinks the worship of the sanctuary is incomplete without his pictures; the musician, in the wildness of his enthusiasm, thinks its service is wanting in solemnity without his music. Thus the fine arts are said to "aid and assist religion," and that pictures are "incentives to pious emotions, helps and auxiliaries to holy devotion." And in the writer's study of the religion of all lands from the ignorant heathen to the enlightened Roman and Briton, he could never see it but connected with some rude or rare work of art. But could he,—professedly a spiritual worshipper of that God who is a spirit and is *only* to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; could he bear such trash as this? could he identify himself with such unrighteous stuff as this? awful delusions! at which the soul shaking in the chains of his bondage, gave utterance to the voice of "roaring."

Next, poetry was seen in the light of a fascinating evil: not the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, penned, by the ready writers in Zion, for Israel's sweet singers unto the Lord from the heart; but that rhyme of mere taste, exquisite in error, and unscriptural in its effects, written to work upon the feelings, excite the passions, and inflame the mind. Witness the following:—

"Who shall an ear to poetry refuse?
 Who shall condemn the labours of the muse?
 That kindles the *purest* passions and inspires,
 Angelic pleasures and sublime desires.
 When thus in sacred unison combine
 Alike inspired the *poet and divine*;
 And where the flowers of *science* all expand,
 Walk *genius* and *devotion* hand in hand."

Now then, reader, are your *purest* passions, the devotion of *genius*? was Peter's and the rest of the apostles? Did the flowers of *science* expand in the essentially "angelic pleasures" enjoyed by Paul when he said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in *heavenly places* IN CHRIST?" Or were the "sublime desires" of David who spoke for God, when he said, "The Lord hath chosen Zion, HE hath desired it for his habitation; this is my rest for ever, here will I dwell;" kindled by the flourish of a poet? No, there is no "sacred unison" between such rhyme and divinity. To the writer, it leads his soul back again to its unregenerate days of intemperate zeal, and misinterpreted sublimity; when in a supposed dignity of mind, but through the pride and vanity of his depraved heart, studying the works of nature, he linked "genius and devotion" together, as twin graces of the Spirit. But now, being taught from above to sing unto the Lord a "new song," the ear is deaf to the voice of such a charmer, and condemns the "labours" of such a "muse."

Then "*music*," that quintessence of all delect-

table enjoyments to the chaste and refined mind, was revealed as being an hurtful lust to his easy caught soul. Nor did its captivating influence become subdued, till the sweeter melody of the Lord's voice from heaven, sounded *salvation* in his ears.

“ Salvation, O the joyful sound
’Tis music.” (’Tis indeed.)

Then as the soul hearkened unto the soothing accents of love and mercy, (sweet music to angels beholding its effects, Luke xv. 10.) that flow from the charming lips of Christ; the harmony of earthly sounds fell in dull cold notes of discord, upon the insensible and better taught ear.

Now these were some of art's abominations, revealed to the writer for the purpose of filling him with abhorrent indignation at those things which had offended and vexed his righteous soul, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God. And of these rudiments of the world, or, as it reads in the margin, “ elements” of the world, elsewhere called the “ beggarly elements” of evil, the writer began to be heartily ashamed, tending as they did to vanity, pride, ambition, and vain glory, with all the refined sins of philosophy.

Now Satan's retort to this line of teaching would be—Thou fool, what can the high and lofty One that is busied with the vast concerns of eternity, and is himself the fulness of all immensity, have to do with thy simplicity? what is thy painting of a picture unto him? But that God might still

the enemy and the *avenger*, he ordained that the strength of his word should come out of the mouth of the babe and suckling in grace. He would, therefore, answer—much every way, for if he comprehendeth the small dust of the earth; counts the very hairs of our heads, and takes thought of the tiny grass and tender herb; who considereth the lilies of the field and feedeth the fowls of the air, how much more shall he not take cognizance of the things of his people? Yes, by him thoughts are known afar off; actions are weighed; and the words of his people God comes for. He knoweth the way that they take and the works that they do. Thus the soul sided with God in the very midst of its sinnings; and, moreover, took its stand by the word of God, when the opposer further asked, “what harm there could possibly be in the painting a picture?” the answer here too was, “much every way.” For the graven or (painted) image, though not resembling anything in heaven above, is in the “likeness of that which is in earth beneath;” and so forbidden to be made, by God in his law (Exodus xx. 4) and also disallowed by God in his gospel. (1 Cor. x. 19, 20.) It is, therefore, an hateful act in his sight. (Deut. xvi. 22); It militates against his glory (Isa. lxii. 8); it provokes him to anger (Is. lxv. 3); it is a curse and an abomination (Deut. xxvii. 15); iniquity and vanity (Hosea xii. 11); it is heart adultery (Exod. xxxiv. 15); and so an unclean *thing* (2 Cor. vi. 17); it is a wicked practice, and a “damnable sin,” (Rev. xiv. 9, 10); unless

God in mercy prevent (Isa. ii. 18). Idolatry was the peculiar temptation which the devil offered unto Jesus on the mountain; (Matt. iv. 9) and is the "positive religion of the apostacy" (Rev. ix. 20). Idolatry in its image worship was the blasting botch of Egypt. In self-adoration and covetousness, it is the plague spot of Europe; and in the worship of the beast, it is the curse of Rome; whilst homage and reverence of the true God above, is the glory of heaven and earth. Now the "fine arts" have ever been the great and leading channels of idolatry since the first heathen worship of the sun, moon, and stars. The labours of painters, gravers, and sculptors, have ever been employed in imagery; in the works of idol service; and they retain to this day their deadening tendency in the heart, to destroy all spiritual worship of God, the spirit and life of all true and vital religion.

Now such was the effect upon the writer with his idol. Sowing to the flesh, he reaped corruption, and becoming the willing servant of sin, the wages of payment he received was death to his comforts, misery in all his ways, and destruction to his peace and happiness. For behold the Lord did send the 'caterpillar' into his 'garden' and the cockatrice into his 'orchard;' and whereas the former eat up every thing 'green;' the eggs of the latter supplied a food that was poison; therefore, those that were eaten brought death and misery into the soul, whilst those that were crushed, broke out into a viper, (Isa. lix. 5.) O,

the many wounding stings inflicted by this scorpion; he was serpent-bitten, and serpent-stung. Yet still to serve the idol was the daily practice of his life; indeed, it was the willing necessity of his nature prompted by the carnal motives—pride, ambition, and love of fame. The mental members were *yielded*, as instruments of unrighteousness unto this sin; and so was he held in the “bondage of corruption,” under the elements of art’s fantastic evils in the world, that he could not release himself; many were the efforts, but man’s strength in spiritual things is the perfection of weakness; “power belongeth unto God.” Then the soul in its suffering, said, “verily I have cleansed my heart in vain,* and washed my hands in (useless) innocency; seeing that “all the day long I am plagued and chastened every morning. When I thought to know truth in this way, (which was God’s way,) not wholly understanding my errors, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end.”

Another memorable Christmas was 1845, when treading in the footsteps of the flock, he followed the dear people of God to the house of prayer. The silly sheep, many years a wanderer “where there was no way,” was then brought back again into the fold of Jesus, and returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul. Here he sat in the long forsaken house, under the faithfully preached

* Referring to these late discoveries and the hope built upon them for good.

word, with delightful enjoyment, finding he could stand the test of scripture in the main; though suffering a "great fight of affliction" in the struggle to maintain his evidences; the severity of the searching word well nigh cutting him off, for the watchman "smote and wounded him, taking away his veil." Still the smittings were in faithfulness and the wounds in love: and so the bitter thing was sweet, and the medicine was food. Yes, there he sat really feeling as they did actually sing,

"No more a stranger or a guest
But like a child at home."

Here the Lord began to put his hand a second time to the work, and severely exercised him in soul by cross-examination and the critical questions of his all-searching Spirit; when the "mystery of iniquity" within was more clearly opened up to his view. Then he rightly understood the ways and workings of his secret enemy, and the treacherous dealings of his own depraved heart; for all things were brought to remembrance from the day of his first "terrible reckoning" until now: and the *greater abominations* than those already revealed, were beheld by the "seeing eye" which the Lord had made. (Prov. xx. 12.) The deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked heart, was then laid bare; its trickery and treachery, duplicity and depravity, set in the light in which they are seen by God himself. (Psalm xc. 8.) "Thy way, O God, is

in the sanctuary:" and here the revelation was made. Yes, a signal honour was put upon the "amiable tabernacle" where God dwelleth; and a special blessing accompanied the faithful preaching of his word. A searching ministry tried and proved him; when being weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, he was "found *wanting*." He was short weight in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity, in temperance, in patience, in chastity, in meekness, in mercifulness, (Matt. v. 7) and in humility; and wanting in wisdom, understanding, and truth; light in the things of God. Then the Lord counselled the soul, no longer to spend its money for that which was not "bread," but to buy of him "gold tried in the fire," that it might be rich in those things that maketh rich, as do all the blessings of the Lord, (Prov. x. 22) without the addition of sorrow. The crown of the spiritually wise, is set with the precious jewels of heavenly wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. And such are rich in the blessings deposited in their "head" even in Jesus Christ, where, or in whom, is all the believer's treasure. Here did the writer now set up his secret affections, finding nothing but death in the destroyer's path; he fixed his thoughts on high, and to the attainment of wisdom, out of which are the "issues of LIFE."

Then art sunk lower than ever in his estimation, and he despised that evil thing which once *he loved, and hated the iniquity so long regarded in his heart.* When rising superior to the beg-

garly element of his nature, and rejoicing in a signification of deliverance, (a granted sense of that pardon which was to be revealed in the fulness of time,) he fain would think the unclean spirit of idolatrous lust, had gone out of him altogether; as if the devil ever yet departed from the soul without tearing it. (Mark ix. 26.)

But the learning by divine teaching of the 'error of his ways' was to be by "line upon line, and precept upon precept." God speaks unto his disobedient children oftentimes as with "stammering lips, and another tongue," revealing unto them a knowledge of themselves and him, by precepts, providences, and parables. Therefore, his was not yet the happy lot of a liberated one, freed from the power and dominion of his particular sin; for whilst in the very act of uttering with the solemn assembly, "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had the dominion over us, but now by thee only, will we make mention of thy name;" "vain deceit," one of the "spoilers" would arise in his heart, and the philosophy of his mind become a 'robber' to his soul. Pollution was his portion. Though in the very house of God, and engaged in the solemn services of the sanctuary, the mind would arrange a picture from the minister and people, or glean ideas of "grouping" from the gathering multitude; or exercise its functions in the interior varieties of the place—anon, a bit of a cloud seen through a skylight, or the rays of the sun darting through a window, would revive all former feelings of de-

light; when the apt imagination would soon picture to the mind a fitly composed subject for their happy representation. Then the canvass and colours were thought of—the time when, and the way and manner how, the contemplated desire was to be carried out—"the master" that painted in that particular style; the many advantages obtained by a mature consideration of the subject, and so on, till he was worked up into the frenzy of enthusiasm, and carried away by a fit of fleshly excitement, into the delectable but delusive regions of art and science; forgetting where he was, who he was, and what he was. And these feelings would come upon him when the brethren were engaged in prayer, or when the more honoured servant was employed in preaching; so that the soul was robbed and spoiled of the pleasure and profit derivable from these first ordinances of God's house. Then was seen exemplified, and was suffered from, that solemn truth of God's word, "Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him *to sin*," a synonymous expression to "surely thou didst set them in slippery places;" "Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" and again, "Is there evil in the city and the Lord hath not done *it*?" or his part. How important the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

This would increase his self-loathings, through *the death workings*, and sinful windings of his *secret enemy*; and add thereunto shame and con-

fusion both before God and his people. For how could he hold up in Zion a heathen's head ; and appear before God with an idolater's heart.

But how kind and good is God the Lord, and what a merciful provision for sinners is the " Mediator" between God and man ; by and through whom we may approach unto our God, vile and filthy though we be. His worth and worthiness demands the Father's blessing *for us* ; his sympathy and affection transfers it *unto us*. Therefore for his sake was pardon to be bestowed ; " God for Christ's sake ;" that he might exalt Jesus upon the throne of the heart for ever ; and everlastingly establish his covenant of peace with the soul ; he spake on this wise ; " not for your sake do I this, saith the Lord, forgiveness is for Christ's sake" (Ephes. iv. 32) ; salvation for my mercy sake (Psalm iv. 4 ; Ibid. xxxi. 16) ; and mercy for my righteousness and truth sake (Ps. ciii. 1) ; and all is for the honour of Christ's " excellent majesty," the glory of his infinite holiness, and to the praise of his " wonderful" name. But unto you belongeth shame and confusion of face ; as he saith unto sinful Israel, " be ashamed and confounded for your *own* ways."

Then was the writer filled with confusion before God ; and in himself he felt truly ashamed of the oaks he had desired ; and was confounded for the gardens he had chosen. And the more conspicuous did the soul's desolation (the reward of its shame) appear, when conscious guilt, shut the mouth of prayer both in public and private. Also

its poverty became manifest by the mingled speech, and confused language of the lips; for having mixed himself up with the heathen, and learnt some of their ways, he spake half in the speech of Ashdod and half in the language of the Jews. O, the "many stripes" with which he was beaten at this stage, from friend and foe. Then said the soul in its calamity, "once my glory was fresh in me, and strong in the Lord, I went forth in the power of his might unto the battle;" but now they that are "younger than I*" have me in derision—"I am small and despised," O my leanness, my leanness. And so shut up would his soul be, that it could not come forth with words to speak that which is good, to the praise of the glory of God; whereas the brethren would out of the abundance of the heart, speak with *their* mouths the wonderful things of God. But the writer's lips were sealed, and no man could open the mouth that God had shut; so that he had *nothing to say* in Zion. And God having "returned to his own place," (Hosea v. 15) he was dumb also before the Lord; thus brought to the place of the "stopping of mouths," he realized in the bitterness of his soul another awful truth of

* Alas, there were many "young ones" who were in "good liking?" and who had "cast out their sorrows;" that looked with an eye of derisive contempt upon him whom they thought years behind themselves in experience. This is a prevalent evil in Zion. May the reader *study rather to be an ensample to the flock, than a lord over God's heritage.* "Consider thyself lest thou also be tempted."

inspiration, "Ephraim shall receive shame, and be *dumb* in the day of rebuke."

Then was the determination made at all risks, to give up that corruption working thing, which was to the soul, as canker is to gold; the very rust of which was a witness against it (James v. 3), and "prayer (though clean shut out) was made for him (that is Jesus Christ) continually," that he would bow the heavens and come down to his release; that he would drive out the enemy of all happiness to his soul, and bring in its "friend," and peace; that he would destroy the idol and cause the image to cease.

But affliction by the rod of correction was yet to be endured, for he "whose way (of mercy) is in the sea, (so deep that it cannot be fathomed by mortals) and whose path (of wisdom and love) is in the mighty waters (so immensely great and broad that men cannot measure it) was pleased still to meet him reprovably in his word. This he did in the night watches, recorded as follows:

Midnight, July 13, 1847. Awoke to meditation, then arose and struck a light to read the word of God. Turning over the sacred page, the eye rested upon the 4th verse, 16 Psalm, "Their sorrows shall be *multiplied* that hasten after another god." Light came in with word, when the secret of all his sufferings was revealed; much of the *cause* having been obscured by the soul's confusion. The folly of his proceedings was then more clearly seen than ever, and he fell under the power of the word. The captive exile now

would fain have hastened to be loosened, as he had formerly made haste to follow "another god" (as the disobedient and idolatrous do) into bondage.

But the soul was still to be kept bound in the chains of captivity (though now a "prisoner of hope,") till the day of its death unto this sin. Nevertheless the heart applied itself unto 'wisdom,' as the principle thing worthy of attainment: feeling assured it was "fools" only, that, because of their transgressions, were thus afflicted." And he said within himself, but "where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" Natural man knoweth not, neither is it to be found in the land where he dwells; "the depth says it is not in me, and the sea saith it is not with me;" *art and science had proved it was not with them.* It cannot be gotten for gold, weighed for silver, or valued for precious stones. That which was destruction and death to his soul, had heard the fame thereof, but never found it out. Then said he who prepared it in his infinite mercy, and searched it out in the depths of his love; yea, who declared it from heaven by his typical lawgiver unto Israel, (Deut. xiii. 4) and established it by the word of the antitypical Shiloh at the gathering of his people unto him when on the earth, (Matt. x. 28) Behold! "the fear of the Lord;" that unerring evidence of eternal interest in the love of God, who possessed *the soul in the beginning* of his way before his *works of old*, (Prov. viii. 22), "the fear of the Lord;" that sure proof in time of being eternally

with him who was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. (verse 23.) "The fear of the Lord," that celestial principle in Jesus when he prepared the heavens, when he established the clouds above, and strengthened the fountains of the deep below. (verse 28.) "The fear of the Lord," daily his delight and the joy of one, rejoicing always before him, (verse 30.) "The fear of the Lord, *that is wisdom*, and to depart from iniquity *that is understanding*." O to be *thus* wise and endued with *this* 'spirit of understanding.' Whoso findeth me (says Jesus the perfection of the wisdom of God,) findeth life and shall obtain favour of the Lord." What a favour to know him that is true, and finding him, to find life. O how the soul, long "spoilt through philosophy" did seize this "substance" of the word of God, and it was now mercifully given him to possess the feeling as an uppermost desire, to walk in the fear of the Lord, to "fear God and keep his commandments;" for in this path, and in this only, (essentially gospel, Acts, ix. 31,) is realized the "*comforts of the Holy Ghost*." The writer then sought out for the sober minded amongst men, desiring to be a "companion of all them that fear *thee* O Lord, of them that keep thy precepts;" who so esteem this "fear" as the "beginning of wisdom" that from a principle of love to such knowledge of God (Prov. ii. 5.) they walk *circumspectly*, "not as fools but as wise." And therefore they endeavour to redeem the past time, spent in evil practices,

and lay in store for themselves "a good foundation against the time to come." (Tim. i. 6. 19.) These ask themselves some solemn questions ere they do this and that in the world, and cannot, dare not, and are determined by the help of God, they *will not* do, as many do, "because it is sin against God." They pause and meditate over their proceedings and practices, and send up the secret cry for preservation from the *least* of all apparent evils, as they would to be preserved from the greatest; because the least, (unrestrained,) ever leads unto the greatest. And they "give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name," for health, help, and strength; bringing as an offering in righteousness" before him, the ascription of praise and "power" unto him, and might both of wisdom and strength; who giveth sustaining, supporting, and resisting grace unto his people, when enabled to "cease from sin," whilst others fall, they say, "So did not I, because of the fear of the Lord." O, that both reader and writer may be like "Obadiah" who feared the Lord "*greatly*."

But to return to the time when the fact was brought to the painter's mind that he had found an enormous increase of sorrow (despite these occasional seasons of revival,) in his "haste" to follow the foolish god of his heart, he was now assured by the many painful discoveries of his dust cleaving propensities, that his pursuit being condemned by God, whose curse *resteth* upon *every evil way*, there was no peace to his heart *in this path*, but multiplying sorrows, accumu-

lating griefs, and growing evils. "Thistles grew instead of wheat, and cockles instead of barley."

Then he repented with that unrepenting sorrow of a godly sort, wherewith he was clothed in his humility, when was revived the righteous desire for deliverance, founded upon the promise of God in the time of the soul's remembrance of its evil ways (Ezekiel xxxvi. 31); and, therefore, (tending, as it did, to salvation,) the soul at the same time was raised up to "hope in the end" by the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. It is not so with the wicked, they "*lie down* in THEIR sorrow."

Still the flesh continued its lustings for carnal food, unsubdued as it was; and did again seek to gather the vintage fruits of wickedness in the autumn of this year. Some charming scenery in Hertfordshire being beheld, when nature was wearing her golden dress, the colours were once more taken out into the fields, to transfer the warm effects of the sun to the canvass. But a counteracting circumstance of spiritual import set in upon him, and he was absorbed in solemn thoughts of God and his soul. And so blessedly was he lifted out of self, and made to sit in a heavenly place, drawn up in heart by the approving smile of God upon an act touching the maintenance of his honour amongst men; that all painting was vain. His "sketch book" only was used, and that to write down his feelings, as follows; "Blessed be God, *my* God, who teacheth my "hands to war, and my fingers to fight;" as an event just happened, required. Now is a mo

ment of separation from the world, a season of deadness to art's delusive charms, and a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord : and, O, to think that ever my highly prized 'sketch book,' with all the darling apparatus for painting from nature, which for years I have *caressingly* carried about with me, as most invaluable treasures,* should have become to me as they now are—*useless lumber* ! O, happy return of early hours : blest precursor of brighter days to come. Undeserved as was the event, yet so it was : he went out to draw and paint, but instead of this, his heart was tuned to sing, and he returned blessing and praising God.

The like merciful display of God's goodness was granted, when in town he went unwittingly to the "Westminster Hall Exhibition of Cartoons." Grace so reigned over nature, that the wonderful productions of England's first master minds in art, were looked upon merely as the superior toys of some vanity fair. The compartments of the Hall were hastily passed through, very hurried glances given at the giant "works"; the fire of enthusiasm was fast going out : all painter-like excitement ceasing ; and sobriety filling the mind that was once all fire, fume, and flame.

* A person never having been the enthusiastic subject of any specific idolatry, can have little idea of the fond attachment for such things. The "materials for painting" were to the writer, as the images of precious metal which *Rachael* stole away, were to Laban : who pursued after *Jacob*, and diligently searched for his lost "teraphim" treasures.

But ah ! the prey was not going to be taken from the mighty, by such an easy process as this. God's way of teaching wisdom, is mostly by showing "*hard things*" unto his people. Though often had up before the bar of God upon trial, the case was not over at the pleading of "guilty." The Surety's time to fulfil the purpose of his heart was not yet come : so that there was no acquittal of the soul. The judge's occasional smile in the "hearing," and his sending the "Comforter" when in the dungeon of despair, was to keep the soul from sinking under the trial, because he was "a prisoner of hope:" therefore the day of deliverance was still deferred.

The devil, the king of terrors, and that great treacherous dealer with God's people, (Isa. xxi. 2.) who makes them pant with the fearfulness of his affrightings, believing that his reign was now short, stirred up his strength in the foul work of spoliation, still to ensnare the poor soul and if possible, to destroy it. A most favourable opportunity presented itself, which he instantly seized, and by artful stratagem, succeeded in again bringing the soul into captivity.

The Committee of the Polytechnic Institution, at the town where the writer resided, projected a plan for a "grand public Exhibition of Philosophical and Mechanical Apparatus, specimens of Antiquity, PAINTINGS, Models, and other objects of Vertu and Art:" what a rational idea, and how apparently harmless the invention ! Now to this he was invited to "contribute:" to aid and assist.

in the promotion of "taste" among the people. His susceptible nature saw no reason why he should not unite in the philanthropic attempt to advance the public good: when, to excite the smothered emulation of his soul, the fact was brought to mind that on a former occasion, he was the successful candidate among competitors for a prize, for the "best painting in oil," offered by the said Institution.

Well, a subject of local interest was soon selected: *a large view of the town*. Every opportunity was then embraced, not to "walk about Zion, to tell the towers thereof, and mark well her bulwarks;" but to walk about the suburbs of the said town, to tell the steeples thereof, and to mark well her chief points of interest and attraction. And, O, the numberless morning, evening, and *Sabbath day* (to his shame be it spoken) visits to the approved spot: and the many 'Sketches' made of its separate parts, for a faithful transcript of the whole. The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light: "Whose *soul* is made 'fat' by such "diligent search" after things spiritual.

Now the public Exhibition scheme, meeting with universal support, it grew into a magnitude, little entertained by its projectors. The 'Opening' therefore, was deferred till the following Summer: which afforded the painter *ample time*, fully to digest his contemplated *ideas*, and to paint his proposed pictures; but, *O*, the torment of his mind, impressed with a

sense of the wrong and unlawful course he was pursuing: it writhed in agony, under the full weight of that condemnatory sentence, now sounding like thunder in his ears, "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god." As the "solitary city" that had become tributary to a foreign power, and of whom it was said "her tears are on her cheeks," so his eyes now poured out tears, and that before God whose "heavy hand" was upon him. Yes, the soul having again fallen from its steadfastness, and erred from the faith, found that "God who distributeth sorrow," had sorely afflicted him for his sin: and not only so, but that as a "man's enemies are those of his own household," he had "pierced *himself* through with many sorrows."

This double suffering under the "power of evil," produced the two-fold cry—for mercy (Psa. lxix. 13.) and vengeance, (Jere. xi. 20.) bringing the soul into some such position as David describes, when he says, "deep calleth unto deep:" or as the prophet expresses the soul's echoing call from the "low dungeon:" "the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

Never was the soul in such "heaviness" before, through the "manifold temptations" of this besetting sin. He was brought to his "wit's end," felt numbered with "fools:" sunk to the lowest possible sense of degradation, and as if he had no pre-eminence above the beast, durst lay hold of only such portions of scripture as *this*, "a living dog is better than a dead lion."

But on looking into the word of God, he found mercy *had* been extended to such vile characters as Manasseh and Mary Magdalene : and that the people of God, in all ages, though the worst of backsliders, had experienced that "the Lord is *good*, his mercy is from everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations." Therefore, as *Noah* could drink to excess and be spared, so might not he who was drunken (though not with wine)? (Is. xxix. 9.) If righteous *Lot* could commit incest, and be preserved of God : might not he whose incestuous heart had lusted after the unclean things forbidden of God? (Deut. iv. 23.) If *Abraham* could tell lies, and be pardoned : so might not he, who like Ephraim, had "compassed God about with lies : " and as the house of Israel with "deceit?" (Hosea xi. 12.) If *Aaron* could deliberately melt down golden earrings, and make an idol calf to be worshipped, and yet be the "called of God" and "anointed of the Lord : " so might not he, called with the one hope of God's calling, and anointed by his Spirit, again with the people of God "come before his presence with thanksgiving?" If *David* could commit adultery and murder, and yet be "guided by the counsel of God, and afterwards received into glory : " might not his "hope" in the mercy of God continue, and his expectation not be cut off, even though he had been guilty of the *adultery of the heart* (Matt. xv. 19.) and murder *of the soul*?* (Prov. xi. 19.) If *Solomon* could

* The 'murder of the soul' must not be here taken to

love the strange women of Moab, Ammon, and Edom, and still the wisdom of God be with him : peradventure, in the strange vanities wherewith the writer 'provoked God,' he might bear with him in *his* folly, and yet teach him wisdom. If *Israel* could " worship false gods, could murmur and rebel, and anger God with their abominable idolatries ;" and yet, " At the same time, saith the Lord, whilst in anger I perform the intents of my heart, will I be the God of all the families of Israel : " surely the rebellious and idolatrous writer might hope yet to be ransomed from the hand of him who was stronger than he, and be caused to walk in the straight ways of Zion, wherein there is no stumbling block laid for the feet. If *Ephraim* could backslide, and hire lovers that loved not God, and yet retain in his heart a " love to tread out the corn : " might not he, though a " simple one," preserved of the Lord, (Psalm cxvi. 6.) and still with the fear of God possessed, though unexpressed, be again received by him who was " the guide of his youth ?"

mean its final destruction, any more than eternal damnation is intended by the expression " The soul that sinneth it shall die." Augustine, referring to his days of study, says, " I sought out the origin of evil, little thinking of the evil of my own heart. I studied the wanderings of *Æneas*, which I attended to whilst I forgot my own. Of what use was it to deplore the self-murdering '*Dido*,' whilst I could bear, unmoved, *the murder of my own soul*, alienated from thee, during the course of these ~~pursuits~~ pursuits, from thee my God, my life."

Yes, these questions were asked, in the deep wailings of his afflicted soul, when he was languishing in the bitterness of spiritual death. But though he saw and lamented his sickness, he could not heal the wound that sin had made; indeed it broke out afresh after the chillings of the winter of 1847 had passed, and the practice for a while been laid aside: when time, thought, labour, study, the heart's affections, silver, gold, and soul, became once more as the "things offered to idols."

At returning spring, 'painting' again presented itself, arrayed in all its attractive charms. The spell bound captive to the idol's shrine, having gained some artistic strength by the rest of winter, is then seen with the palette in hand, well set with colors, waiting for the morning light at home, or starting out before daybreak on his way to the fields, that he may catch the first glad glimpse of the early sun, and gather from the bounteous stores of beautiful nature, those useful things which are the best excellencies of art; and all, for the progressing pictures to be exhibited the coming May. Morning, noon, and at night, he is at the study, but still exclaiming, 'O this idol, this idol,' I cannot give it up, fortitude, unsupported by the strength of the Lord, fails before the power of temptation. The reader can scarcely conceive of the continual conflict in the writer's soul, and the constant tossings of the *writer's mind*, unless he has been tried in a similar manner. *It was an every day, and all the day, source of worry and anxiety, year after year (when*

the 'fit' was on) intruding itself as it did into every engagement, and marring the pleasure of every spiritual employment. Not an object was seen out of doors, or in, but it immediately became a subject of the mind's arrangement, and was appropriated to the purposes of art. The very words of men's mouths, the solesisms of common conversation set in juxta-position to correct speaking, were in like manner, arranged according to the order of science, by the rules of contrast, effect, and foil. So that the spoiling power of philosophy continually at work, was to his "substance" as the moth fretting at the garment, till it had consumed its beauty: so did it eat up his soul comforts, and destroy his spiritual pleasures. O the plague of such a fretting leprosy as is a darling lust in the soul.

Moreover it disqualified him for the exercise of those desires which at the occasional comings of the Lord when "clothed in his right mind," sprang spontaneous from the soul. One instance shall suffice. A dear and tried brother came to see him, and from his modest tale of mournful woe, the writer was sure he was in distress, when his heart went out in desire to relieve him. But just as the thought was ripening into the act, that "fox" that walks about Zion in the desolate places of God's people's hearts, spoilt the tender grape of the vine. Stirring up the selfish spirit of parsimony, he suggested with the hypocritical virtue of his camelion heart of subtlety, that that "good thing" found in the writer towards the Lord God, required discretion in its use (Ps. cxii.

5) he must, therefore, guide his affairs so and be "just before he was generous." Think, said he, of the scripture, "owe no man anything," and then remember the 'frame' that you have ordered for one of your pictures; that comes to *just the money you were going to give away*. Is it right to enrich your Christian friend at the expense of your creditor?

This first staggered the soul, spoilt also for the understanding of Satan's 'devices' through 'philosophy and vain deceit;' when losing hold of his 'sword,' Satan got the advantage over him, who, seeing him "fall by his iniquity," trampled the good intentions of his heart under foot. Thus he was prevented the privilege of lending unto the Lord, and robbed of that sweetness, which the 'righteous desire' accomplished, ever brings into the soul.

But this is not all—suffering as an 'evil doer,' or rather an 'evil doer,' justly suffering; unlike faithful Paul who was in bonds, *as* are evil doers, (yet not being one), but a "prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ's for the *gospel's* sake (not his sins), the idolater's sorrows were multiplied on the ground of his unlawful position. He could not count it "all joy when he fell into divers troubles," for being drawn away of his own heart's lust and enticed, he was suffering as a "sinner in Zion" and, therefore, justly filled with sorrow; "Yet, if any man suffer *as a christian*, let him not be ashamed; but glorify God on this behalf." May my brother and sister realize a *blessedness when persecuted for righteousness sake*,

and when evil is spoken against them *falsely*, for *Jesu's sake*, 'rejoice and be exceeding glad.'

But to return to the contrary sort of suffering and the time when he was robbed and spoiled through the oppression of the enemy. Now the Most High God had got a word to say upon the subject, and he, the more effectually to break into gospel obedience the rebellious spirit of this 'self glory' seeker, spoke with power in the soul, afflicting it; saying, "Whoso seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" This after it had melted him in contrition, at the hardness of his heart towards his brother, came as a question from God that wanted answering, "*How dwelleth the love of God in him?*" Alas, he was again made 'dumb with silence' as David was, and obliged to fall down before God, smitten in heart and conscience by the Lord; for the word of exhortation was rendered a nullity which says, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them that suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body." Then was presented to the mind that touching scene in which the disciples of Christ, who enter into his joy, are described as being honoured of their Lord and Master, set forth in the following language. Says the modest humility of the "good and faithful" servants, whose love is "*in deed*" and "*in truth*," "Lord when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink; a stranger and took

thee in; naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick and in prison, and came unto thee? Then answered the king and said unto them; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these, *my brethren*, ye have done it unto me." Then came again the touching enquiry to the writer's soul, "*How dwelleth the love of God in you?*" The answer was returned in sighs and groans; for the wound was great, and the affliction grievous unto him. It made him go with broken bones, and walk with feeble knees, in the bitterness of his heart; with hands hung down for days, not 'enduring grief,' suffering *wrongfully*, but righteously suffering as an—"evil doer."

Thus, not being 'mighty in the scriptures,' in the hour of need 'he was thrown down of the devil,' God having 'weakened' the backslider's 'strength in the way.' And because he remembered not the days of his youth, nor performed the 'vow' he had made unto the Lord in the day of his epousals, but followed the vain and wicked imaginations of his own evil heart, "thou, O God, turned the edge of his sword, and didst not make him to stand in the day of battle." Then did the sighs and cries of the captive exile, that goeth not out of feigned lips,' but proceedeth from a "broken and contrite heart," ascend up on high, and which '*strivings in prayer for the Lord's sake,*' was graciously heard and answered of God. And he fulfilled his promise made to *those who fall by the* "sword, by captivity, and

by spoil;" "*when they fall*, they shall be holpen with a *little help*." So he was again lifted up of the Spirit and made to stand on his *feet*; when enabled to make the language of 'Jacob' unto 'Gad,' his own, he said, 'a troop may overcome me, but I shall surely overcome them at last.' Therefore, "Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy, though I fall, I shall rise again, and yet praise the Lord." Thus, '*little helps*' coming from God, the 'helper of Israel,' are great lifts to the soul.

Howbeit, the 'high places' were not removed; but whilst they stood, there was still a burning incense unto vanity, and the soul went astray after idols following in the way of 'Baalim.' The pictures were persisted in till finished, when the day arrived for receiving them at the Exhibition. But, O, what a strife and conflict there was in the soul about sending them. The rival interests of nature and of grace, put forth their claims: the flesh lusted against the spirit, and the spirit strove against the flesh; the foolish heart on the one hand, was carried away by that captivating charm of delusion to the painter—fame—on the other hand, was a soul sensible of the sinful act in the sight of *God*, and well disciplined in the sorrow attendant upon such a course. Chastized by God, as were the Egyptians in their plagues, '*through their own idols*,'" "the object of worship became the instrument of punishment." The idol, therefore, that had 'made him to sin,' continued to afflict; and he was pricked in his reins by the harrassing torment of that '*hard thing*' to be borne

"a wounded conscience." How gladly would he have broken the chains and fetters wherewith he was bound if he could; but sin once indulged in, has a power too strong to resist any opposing effort, but the force of an Almighty arm; so 'bonds abode him.'

Now the painter had *five* pictures to send, one in particular (a large work) the product of much labour, thought, and study. These 'household gods' were carefully carried down town the over night to avoid the publicity of day time; when he found (as he was ever sure to do) a severe check was given to his fancied enjoyment, arising now from the fact at once brought to mind, that *it was lecture night at his chapel*. The building stood in his way—he had to pass it at the time of *service*—when he came within sight of it his heart melted within him like wax, and his whole frame shook with the "terrors of the Lord:" yet still he proceeded; but ah, as he *passed* the sacred place, the Lord's people within had just come before his presence with *singing*; when the sweet sound of the saint's voices making melody unto the Lord falling upon his ear, completely broke his spirit. Such was the effect upon him that it suffused the soul in penitential tears of sorrow, and made him carry his trash, sad and silent to the county hall. Thoughts, as the thoughts of many hearts instead of one, then crowded into the mind, and conscience bearing witness for God against him, did its faithful *office to condemn*. Indeed such was the power *with which he was smitten*, that the "whole head

became sick and the whole heart faint," and which made him ill for days. "Stricken of the Lord through his revoltings," (Isa. i. 5) he suffered a 'plague of sicknesses' for the various sins of his many years service of strange gods, the Lord being pleased to lay his wounding hand upon him. And, therefore, he found it to be even as God had said unto Israel, "I will make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate for thy sins."

Surely nothing can equal the distress of a 'wounded conscience,' smitten with 'grief' and sickness, through God's displeasure of its sin. When the soul surfeited with its own abominations, abhors itself and loathes all carnal food. When sick of sin, sick of sorrow, sick of suffering; weary through crying, faint through fasting, and worn down by suffering, it is pining away in the misery of spiritual destitution, sinking in the bitterness of apparent desertion, and weeping over the barrenness of sensible desolation. How art thou cast down O my soul in thy sorrows, when Jesus withholds the approving smile, the Father puts on the unwilling frown, and the 'Comforter' will not come. But it was all to show God's utter detestation of sin, and to make the soul abhor it too; that God and the soul might have but one opinion about the writer's particular sin, let men botch it over as they might *and did*. Moreover, it was to subdue the determined resistance of his authority, and bring down the soul to the lowliness of repentance; that as *sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace*

reign through righteousness unto eternal life. It was all to pave the way for the free entrance of the love of God into the heart; and to endear the enriching blessings treasured up in the Lord Jesus Christ for the soul. Therefore it had a wonderful weaning effect upon him, and was a time of great destruction to the flesh.

Then God reduced some of his hard sums into simple figures, for the easy reading of his ignorant child. He taught him a lesson upon the "lust of the eye:" that the soul might be exercised unto discernment in the subtle workings of his besetting sin. The painter on going into a Virtuoso's shop to purchase a little sketch of 'grazing cows,' a larger and better painted picture, in the window, arrested his ready attention, which quite eclipsed the beauty of the one he was going to see. On asking the price inside, a splendid Marine piece, by 'Chambers,' darted its shining excellencies into the easy caught heart, and which being desired also, the price was asked of that. Scarcely had the answer been given, before another grand production of some great 'master' met the eye, and the desire went out after that also: when Jesus presented the brighter beauties of *his* perfections to the imagination, and the mind was stayed. But ah, thought our painter, now in possession of the well learnt lesson, "the eye is never satisfied with seeing, 'how great is the iniquity of the covetousness of the heart.'" Such covetousness is that positive idolatry of my heart, for the iniquity of which

God is wroth; yes, this was Ephraim's sin—and the writer's. Truth was here seen to be truth indeed, which declares, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase." For so the idolater found it with his multiplied gew-gaws of attraction: "As when goods increase, they are increased that eat them;" so when the number of pictures seen were increased, the desire was increased that wanted them. But thus it is with the ravenous appetite of our nature for carrion; the rapacity of the carnal heart's craving is insatiate.

Now the pictures are received with a critical complaisance at the 'Hall' of the Exhibition, and the day of 'opening' draws nigh. In the mean time, Mr. Allen, from Stepney, came to preach in the town, when the writer hearing him, experienced a most blessed revival in his bondage, and refreshing in his spirit, as he spake from these words, "BUT THE ANOINTING WHICH YE HAVE RECEIVED OF HIM ABIDETH IN YOU." There was "the anointing;" its reception; the characters who received it; from whence it came; and its abiding nature. All gloriously made manifest by the ministration of the Spirit as being the work of Jehovah, and worthy the work of our God. Yes, as an able minister of the New Testament, he spake with the ability which God the Holy Ghost giveth, (and which is the true test of being called of God to the ministry, as was Aaron to the priesthood,) with unction, savor, and power; bedewing, baptizing, and blessing the soul. And so did God

feed the soul with food "convenient," (or suitable,) and "nourishing," that the word ministered in the gospel of Christ, in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, laid the foundation for great strength against the coming of the great temptation; so that when the important day arrived for the *public opening* of the 'Grand Polytechnic Exhibition' at the great County Hall, he was proof against its winning power. He was furnished of the Lord with armour that resisted temptation, and so "endued with power from on high," that when Satan came to tempt the soul in the usual way, he met a *giant*—strong in the Lord, and standing in the power of his might.

Beholding the soul's faith, he fled before simple resistance. (James iv. 7.)

Diary Record, May 29th.—"The doors of the Shire-hall were thrown open; and, O, this long looked for, impatiently waited for, and anxiously watched day, what a failure! not in the exhibition itself, that is grand indeed; but in the effect it has produced on my soul—its importance passed off the writer's mind as quickly as water does poured upon oilskin. Blessed, thrice blessed be the Lord my God, he so filled my mouth with *his* 'GOOD THINGS,' that I wanted nothing at the hands of the world to make me happy. Happy with Jesus and full of him, the exhibition with all its wonders was passed by unheeded and uncared for; grace put a stamp of vanity upon all *such worldly things*—so did not go."

May 30th.—"The ANOINTING abided, and the

soul was still so wrapt up in love with the attractive charms of him who is "altogether lovely," as not to care a bit about the exhibition.* Called on a brother who was full of it, whereas the writer felt quite indifferent to it, and lamenting to behold this mote in his brother's eye, would fain have said 'let me pull it out.' But alas, the beam was in his own; for

May 31st.—"The prurient desire to take a peep arose in him and prevailed. He went, but blessed be God, he never entered a gallery of paintings before, so dead to all pleasurable feelings of artistic delight. Each of the great rooms were filled with an endless variety of every description of art, manufacture, and work of natural curiosity; but still they failed with all their attractive powers and alluring charms, to draw away the soul from that greater charmer—JESUS. There were beauties seen in him surpassing all other works of his own creation, and infinitely outshining the best productions of man."

Still the visit did the writer good, it tested the strength of the soul's attainments, (Philip iii. 16) as a weaned child of the Lord's. It was the time and place when the soul established in hope through the

* Lest the reader should wonder what more there could be in a public exhibition than anything else, he will please to bear in mind, that to be an 'Exhibitor,' was the height of ambition to which the writer from his very childhood had aspired.—NOTE. How remarkable the circumstances attending the gratification of his wishes. What a shadow did he grasp in the attainment, as the fruit of years spent in vanity, toil, and trouble.

abiding anointings of the Spirit, said "of the host that had encamped against him, and the foes that eat up his flesh," peradventure, I shall yet be able to overcome the enemy through Christ that strengtheneth me, and drive him out of the land. It was the procuring cause of a positive *presentiment*, that God would destroy the image of his heart altogether, so that he should no more 'pollute his name with idols,' or provoke him to anger with his abominations. It was also the birth-place of a most determined resolution, by the help of God, to wipe off the reproach *unjustly* cast upon the name of Christ, but justly attached to *his* name as a Christian. For he had long suffered that "shame" which is the "*promotion of fools*," and this point had now risen to great importance in his soul. He felt that the praises of an eulogistic public being the applause of sinful men; the honours of worldlings, bestowed on the products of his fleshly mind, (whilst at the same time he was professing to have "the mind of Christ,") were a disgrace and a shame unto him; just as 'the strength of Pharaoh was the shame of Israel.' (Isa. xxx. 3.) Nor was it a small matter of concern to the writer when he found there were many of the dear children of God amongst the worldly crowd, caught in the *snare of curiosity*, to go and see the wonders of the show. But added thereto was suffering from self-condemnation of soul, when he heard them inquire for the *pictures of—their brother*. What an incongruous *association*, and how did it fill him with shame

and dishonour, as he was magnified by such *unlawful means*. Moreover, sighing in secret at their worldly mindedness, the reproach of his sufferings fell upon himself as the cause; having put the 'stumbling block,' or occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Saturday Night, June 2, Recorded—"Whilst I deplore my heart departures from the Lord, and mourn over the carnal tendency of my mind, I do desire to bless God for the mercies of this week; believing my soul has made rapid progress towards settlement, upon the long and powerful subject of *painting*."

But *establishment* was still deferred until God's "utterly" came and abolished the idol altogether. The "full end" of Arts' perfection yet to be made by God, was not seen in the light which he spreadeth upon idols, when *all* the hope set upon them is slain; therefore, the soul was not at rest in the satisfaction that there was *nothing* but death and destruction in the pursuit, till God broke the head of this leviathan in pieces, destroying the idol and causing the image 'to cease.'

During the second week of the Exhibition the love of Jesus *in its manifestation* somewhat subsided; when visits were again paid to the great temple full of idols. Now the writer was to learn that *this* also was sin; that the soul in every 'house of iniquity' is in the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death; that every path which does not lead to God, is a path of the destroyer's and leads to the devil. That the true

disciple of Jesus in following him, must abs from the *very appearance* of evil, as well as practice of it. Confession of sin will never suff there must also be a forsaking it. This he not done, he was in the 'way of arts' snares 'traps' still; he was in the regions of science st his deadness to his darling sin therefore, rather circumstantial than effectual, and he no confidence *before God* in its *final* destruct The soul could not sing on the shores of safet 'passover song of praise,' rejoicing with a glori triumph in the fact, that "the horse and his ri were thrown into the sea." Therefore, the he was not 'perfect' with the Lord his God as David's; neither were the 'altars' removed the groves cut down. There was yet a linger of the heart upon philosophy's plains, a look up to the hills from whence help could ne come; and a longing at times to eat flesh, that flesh which alone is "meat" and food for soul. Yea, there was still a kissing of the ha in reverence of the idol.

Then said the Lord, "What could have b done more for my servant than I have doi O Ephraim, what will reclaim thee? I h hewed thee by my prophets, and slain thee the words of my mouth; I have drawn thee w "cords of a man and bands of love:" nothing now left me but judgment or destruction! " Ephraim, how shall I give thee up?"

"*When Israel was a child then I loved h and called my son out of Egypt.*" I taught

also the way he should go, taking him by the arms. I was the guide of his youth, and had promised to be with him to old age and hoar hairs. But how has he obeyed? Alas, my son! thou hast grievously sinned, so as to "fall by thy iniquity;" thou hast wilfully rebelled by departing from my precepts. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; thou hast broken thy vow, forgotten the covenant of thy God, forsaken me, the fountain of living waters; and hewed out to thyself broken cisterns that can hold none. Thou hast wandered in forbidden paths, changed thy god, followed vanity and become also vain; thou hast sold thyself for nought; made league with the inhabitants of the world; become a prey to the mighty and gone into captivity of soul. But is Israel a servant? Is he a home-born slave? Is he not my freeborn son? Why then is he spoiled?

As I live, saith the Lord, I will rescue his soul from destruction, and my darling from the lion's den. For I am the Lord *thy God*, the Holy One of Israel, *thy Saviour*. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. I, even I am the Lord (mighty to save) and beside me there is no Saviour (strong to deliver.) From all your idols will I cleanse you, and make you clean in my sight. "For my own sake will I do it, for how should my name be polluted."

I will therefore return, but not to destroy THEE, O Ephraim, (Hosea xi. 9,) for 'I have redeemed *thy* life from destruction.' But because

thou hast rejoiced, O young man in thy youth *but not in me* ; because thou hast cheered thyself, *but not from me* ; and walked in the ways of thine own heart, *which is not according to mine* ; in the sight of thine own eyes, *which is not 'well pleasing' to mine* ; know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

In time or eternity we may depend upon it, as God is true, we shall be rewarded for our sins. For though "blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not (or will not for Christ's sake everlastingly impute) iniquity;" blessed also is the man whom thou, Lord, chastenest (or is the subject of the Lord's chastisement *in time*) *for* iniquity. Though he will in *no wise* cast out those who come unto God by him ; he will also in "*no wise* spare the guilty that depart from him." Among the sheep of God there are many wanderers, and these are exposed to the dangers of the wilderness ; in his family there are "fools," and the rod is for the back of such ; the disobedient are to be "beaten with many stripes;" the backsliders, "robbed" and "wounded;" the idolaters "spoiled," and the prodigals "starved." Indeed they are the very appointed people to be afflicted in time, by God's rod of correction for sin. (Lam. iii. 1.) "Shall I not," says he, "as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?" Yes, "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done ; and *there is no respect of persons.*" God's command to the prophet was, "Show my people their

transgressions; and the *house of Jacob* their iniquities."

As the "Lord's controversy" then with his erring children is maintained by punishment (Hosea xii. 2) ere pardon is bestowed through his covenant of peace, in the which he argues with them the justice and righteousness of his dealings, in vindication of his own honour and glory; yea, and well establishes his character as a 'just God' holy and upright in his ways (in all which the soul is brought fully to acquiesce); so now the Most High began to utter his mighty voice from heaven, to melt the writer's earthly heart, and make his judgments known. Having vexed his soul with sorrow, and grieved it with suffering on account of its sin, God now said, "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." The heart was to be crucified in its *affections*, (the strong hold of his idol) as well as its lusts.

To this end he suddenly visited him with a sore calamity in his family, whereby he brought him into judgment by a severe soul exercise touching the *anticipated* death of one of his dear and much loved children.* As he said unto Ephraim, "I will be unto him as a lion, I will meet him as a bear bereft of her whelps;" so he now became to this backsliding Ephraimite, because *he* also had made him images, according to his own understanding, that he might tear away the iniquity of

* Described more at length in the 'Gospel Magazine' for August, 1848, page 353.

his heart bound up as it was with idols ; and make him know no God but him, and no Saviour beside the Lord. Then was it a time of sore tribulation indeed, when the zeal of the Lord of Hosts was performing the intents of his heart towards his unworthy servant by such painful means, to establish for ever the throne of his Son, with justice and judgment, in righteousness and truth. The love of his heart was wrapt up in this stroke of his rod, though the soul could realize none of God's fatherly affection in the dispensation, till the mystery of *such* a mode of dealing was solved, and the secret of God's purpose revealed. Until when it was driven about of adverse winds ; "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." It was like the ship in a storm at sea, a thousand miles from land, that puts up its signal of distress in vain ; for the chief 'lover and friend' of his soul was put far from him and his 'desired acquaintance' into darkness. The Comforter that should relieve the soul, withheld his soothing power and God hid, as it were, his face from him ; he made darkness his secret place, and veiled himself in thick clouds of obscurity, shutting out his prayer, which returned unto him again. Yea, he made the heavens as the impenetrable brass, so that there was no access unto God there ; and he sealed up the blessed scriptures of his word and truth upon the earth, where 'no man in heaven nor in the earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book,' so that *there was no comfort there.*

Then, O, the agony of his mind as he paced the melancholy room, clasping his clay cold child in his arms; when in loneliness of suffering there seemed no eye to pity, and no arm to deliver; and as if God had forsaken him, there was 'no helper' *in* the trouble, and no escape *out* of it.

The dear child, that once lively little boy, who at his father's accustomed call on his entrance into the house, would turn his animated head every way to see from whence the voice came, was now lying pale, dull, and insensible to a sound. When the doctor revived him from his lethargic state, he took a ghastly look upon all around him (seven in number) and recognized the writer above all the rest; singling him out as the one upon whom to fix his beseeching eyes for help; when, as with a dying effort, he turned himself round, and stretched out his tiny arms for him, *and only him*, to take him. Ah, this tore the caul of his heart, and was as the rending of body and soul asunder, feeling as he Jonah-like did, "the whole cause of the evil rested upon him;" and that the very affection of his child was sent to wound him.

Then was the successful moment for the tempter, when the soul was in a bewilderment of anxiety, not knowing what the Lord really meant by such a sudden visitation; for him to fix upon *the child* as the idol, and the parent's fondness for it as the foundation evil, for this grievous calamity. Peradventure, he hoped to thwart the purposes of *Jehovah*, or to rob the soul of the intended bless-

ing ; nor was it until the mind was well exercised in the trial, and well instructed by the affliction, that Satan's policy was overturned. The heart knowing its own sickness and its own sore, was then taught the difference between that love of one's own flesh which is lawful, and that love of the world which is lustful.*

Then was the cry put up for all that there was in the heart opposed to God and godliness to be subdued, overcome, annihilated ; for strength to cut off a right arm, or power to pluck out a right eye, if either were the sinning member. Indeed, to have gathered up and destroyed all that offended of the unseemly works of the flesh. The soul brought down by "hard labour," was made willing to part with *all* for Christ ; desiring that he, in his peaceful kingdom, might reign in the heart, rule over the affections, and regulate the actions from this time forth and for evermore.

Looking back upon the great deliverances wrought for Israel of old, hope received a little help from the fact, that though "God kindled his fire against Jacob, and poured out his anger upon Israel," he being "full of compassion" forgave *their* iniquity and destroyed them not ; but many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. (Psalm lxxviii. 35.) "Deal

* The distinction here is important. Fond attachment for relatives, dear by the ties of blood is commended in scripture. (Titus ii. 4 ; Ephe. v. 25.) The love of them *more than Jesus* is condemned (Matt. x. 37.) Idolatry, *therefore, (essentially considered)* consists only in the love *and worship of that which* is forbidden of God.

thus bountifully with thy servant, O Lord," was then the prayer, "Thou was a God that forgavest *them*, though thou tookest vengeance upon *their inventions*." Let then the vengeance of thy heart be unto that *in me* which defiles and maketh abomination, after the working of Satan, "not after God;" but "take not the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul."

Anticipating the loss of his dear child, the writer drew a likeness of him, as he lay sleeping away his life in his mother's lap; this he did to retain the sweet image of his beautiful boy in the mind, when death had done its office, and memory failed. This was the *last time* that ever the sinning* pencil was taken in hand, and O what a subject sent him for the *final sketch*. How wonderful in working is 'God, the God of Israel,' to wind up the practice of *twenty years*, with such a wounding event as this.

Now as the child grew worse, the parent became more oppressed, the severity of the anticipated stroke being increased by the darkness of his mind. As the scriptures declare, "Where there is no vision the people perish," so was he languishing on his couch well watered with tears,

* Or, pencil made to sin; not *sinful*, as that *it* (an inanimate object) might be censured. An idol, as described in scripture, is of itself a *dumb* idol, "It cannot do evil, neither also is it in it to do good." Christians need not be afraid of any breathless image (Jer. x. 5,) but they had need stand in awe at the depravity of their own hearts; and also watch unto prayer lest being tempted, they are "drawn away of their own heart's lusts, and enticed."

perishing for "lack of knowledge" into the mystery of God's will concerning this thing; then he cried out with David, "I am afflicted and ready to die, for whilst I suffer thy terrors, O Lord, I am distracted. Let me live by thy word: and be revived by the power of thy truth. Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.—Wilt thou shew thy wonders to the dead? Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave?" "Shew me thy ways O Lord, and wherefore thou hast afflicted me thus?" But clouds and darkness were still the habitation of his throne, whilst the soul was fed with wormwood, and given the water of gall to drink. Ah, a trial to a child of God without Jesus *in* the trial is sore affliction indeed; a trouble without special help from on high to bear up under it, is soul tribulation indeed; but to feel rather the devil's captive, (2 Tim. ii. 26,) than the Lord's prisoner, (Eph. iii. i.); for the prayer to return back again into our own bosoms unanswered, and seemingly unheard; for thoughts and very deeds to be the accusers; and then to have to say "reproach hath broken my heart;" this distress unrelieved by the counter blessings of God's consolations, is the uttermost anguish the soul can endure. Such was the extremity to which the idol lover was reduced; and which formed the poignant sting of all his sufferings. Not that he suffered, but that he was alone in his sorrows. Hence the chief thing desired of the *Lord*, was to find him to be what his word declares he is—'the remembrancer of David *in*

his affliction,' 'the helper of Israel in trouble; strength to the soul in its weakness, the giver of power in the time of faintness; and so the glorifier of himself by his goodness. Yea, that God would get unto himself a great name by the signal deliverance of his soul; that "the Lord of hosts might be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy, sanctified in righteousness." Therefore, he wanted a word from the Lord, to reveal the *secret of the visitation*, and reconcile the soul to his righteous dispensation, that he might have wisdom given him from above, fully to justify God in his act of retribution; and be enabled with Job, to bless him as well for taking away, as for giving, did it so seem good in his sight.

At length it pleased him whose "mercy endureth for ever," and who had said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my servant and heard his cry by reason of bondage; I have seen the oppression wherewith the enemy oppresses him, and heard his groanings;" now that I have slain his hopes set upon idols, I will quicken his expectation from me; having wounded his heart by affliction, I will heal it in love. For I have remembered the covenant I made with him, though he has broken the *vow* he made to me; nevertheless, his ingratitude shall not hinder my grace, neither shall his forgetfulness frustrate my favour; his prodigality shall not sever him from my love, nor his idolatry from my heart. Return, O, backsliding Israel unto the Lord, for I am married unto thee; and walk no more after the

imagination of thine *own* evil heart, but after the ways of *mine*, and thou shalt no longer be termed desolate and forsaken, but become the delight of the Lord. (Isaiah lxii. 4.)

Then God spake these words with power into the soul, in explanation of his reasons for afflicting it, and to show the end and design he had in view of accomplishing by it. "THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LORD ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS ALTOGETHER; MORE TO BE DESIRED THAN GOLD, YEA, THAN MUCH FINE GOLD; SWEETER ALSO THAN HONEY AND THE HONEYCOMB. MOREOVER, *by them* IS THY SERVANT WARNED." (Psalm xix. 9, 10, 11.)

What an unravelling of mysteries came in with this revelation from heaven. 'The secret of the Lord' was at once unfolded and the purposes of his heart made known to the heart of one that was his, of whom he had said, "It *shall* be well with them that fear God;" so that the "goodness of God" burst in open vision upon the soul, which now saw the way and manner in which it was to be redeemed, even by '*judgment*.' That judgment here was to take the place of condemnation hereafter, in manifestation of the same mercy he showed unto Jacob, but withheld from Esau. Yea, that he might partake of the free gift of righteousness by Jesus Christ unto justification, (Rom. v. 17,) in contradistinction to the judgment of condemnation sealed by the coming of Jesus into the world and passed upon the wicked. (John ix. 39.) Was not this a truth "more to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold," which treasures

are kept by the owners thereof to their hurt? Was not this an impartation of that "wisdom" which "cannot be gotten for gold," and is much more precious than rubies? Was it not the "principal thing" desired of the Lord when the soul said, "I am afflicted very much, quicken me O Lord unto an apprehension of its meaning, according to thy word" and promise. Yes, truly this righteous visitation of judgment in the truth and faithfulness of God, was more to be desired, loved, longed and 'hoped for' than gold; and was 'sweeter' also to the taste than honey, and the honeycomb." What is so sweet to the labouring man as rest, or to the troubled man as peace? and what to the weary and heavily laden with sin, as to find rest and peace in a sin-bearing Jesus? When he found these words he did eat them, and they were unto him the joy and rejoicing of his heart. To realize an interest in Jesus, and to have access with confidence by the faith of him unto the Father, will make amends for all the troubles of the way. A knowledge of the true and righteous judgment of the Lord brought him this sweetness.

"Moreover by them is thy servant *warned*." Cautioned once of God in mercy, to "beware lest he be spoilt through philosophy," &c.; now *warned* of God by judgment, *not to be so*. This is the practical use and benefit of all divine teaching by precept, here below; to wean the soul from Satan, self, and sin, that it may live unto God, and the Father, and Christ. This causes the warfare, for as the heaven is for height and the earth for depth, so

is God for holiness and the devil for sin. And that learning in a man, and supposed wisdom, and showy attainment, that does not lead to similar results, like the idol, it is "not after God," and not after Christ. Now as Noah was warned of God to the preparing of an ark lest he be drowned in the mighty waters, so the writer was warned of God to take refuge in his "*ark*" lest he be swallowed up in the latter day deluge of sin. (Rev. xx. 8.) He was "warned" also of his unruliness as a member of the mystic body of Christ; and exhorted to "flee youthful lusts which war against the soul." He was warned no more to be 'spoilt' for happiness and usefulness through the philosophy of this world, or to be in bondage under its elements. He was warned not to "spend his money for that which is not bread or his labour for that which satisfieth not." Yea, 'because he was warned,' God assured him he should 'live;' and no longer 'have his sorrows multiplied by hastening after another god.' 'All the gods of the people,' said he, are idols; thine is the 'God of salvation.'

Now what a suitable word from the Lord to 'make glad' the heavy heart; and to assure it of the abiding faithfulness of God. A visit in judgment to redeem the soul that had sinned in the face of mercy; 'a fire of the Lord's in Zion, provided for time, that he may be saved from the "everlasting burnings." O, the manifold wisdom of God, wrapt up in the mystery of his will, and made known unto the church by Jesus Christ, in part, (that is, by purpose) in measure, not in its fulness, YET IN ITS BLESSEDNESS, according to the

measure of the gift of Christ. And the revelation of the Lord's counsel according to the kind thoughts of peace to his people and not of evil causes the soul to be fruitful in its affliction; and to abound in thankfulness for the good derived therefrom. Yes, afflictions drive us to the throne, they quicken our drooping faith and wean us from the world. Therefore, they are kind and considerate mercies, and though sharp is the exercise of soul under the chastening hand of the Lord, it is the severity of love—the rod of a *father*, and not the sword of an enemy. Such a language of action, is the justifiable 'rough speaking' of a true and faithful friend.

But how mysterious the way God takes of making himself known to his people. He acts by contrarieties, to overturn the subtle reasonings of man, and to dethrone the crafty policy of the devil. That his *sovereignty* may be broad displayed for all to see, he signalizes himself as the sole Creator of all worlds, and controller of all events.

That *his will* may be known on the earth, he makes two vessels in the sight of all mankind, the one to honour, and the other to dishonour; and the latter, the servants *in all respects* to the former.

That his *power* may be manifest, he gives commandment to save them, commissions his Son to do it, and defies all powers to prevent it.

That his *love* may be known, he parts with *himself* by a mysterious and incomprehensible

severation for them; that they may part with themselves for him. Yea, he dies for them, that they may never die to him; and finally takes them to glory that they may never be separate from him. He is merciful to their *unrighteousness*, and faithful to their *unfaithfulness*. "He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil." He makes gifts to the rebellious, clothes them with righteousness and strength; feeds them with wisdom and knowledge; fills them with glory and honour; and in the fulness of time they enter heaven with the bright colours of a love inscribed banner waving in victorious triumph over their heads, to take possession of a kingdom and a crown.

These are they who are ransomed eternally from sin, by the blood of a crucified Redeemer; and in time, are saved experimentally from sinning, by the true and righteous judgments of the Lord. "Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, *because of the judgments of the Lord.*" He showed his word unto Jacob; his statutes of and his *judgments* unto Israel. And these in faithfulness and love he made the writer to know when he brought him into the stripping room, and disrobed him of all his royal rags; when he taught him what true wisdom was, and showed him where it lay, even in "the fear of the Lord;" and led him into the knowledge and understanding of his will, so as to cause him to depart from '*philosophy and vain deceit;*' and follow after *righteousness and peace.* Nor did the "goodness

and mercy" of the Lord stop here, for he brought the soul into a state of perfect submission to his will, so that he desired, yea, begged and prayed that God, for the sake of his dear Son, would—

"Tear the idol from his heart
Whate'er that idol be."

The language was—make me to know the "acceptable and perfect will of God," and may it be the rejoicing of my heart to do it, as it was the psalmist's "delight," and thy Son's "meat and drink." Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And the answer returned, quite set the mind at rest as to which was the evil in the sight of the Lord, the delectable science, or darling child, and that which offended the soul. For the strength of "the waster" was weakened, and God exalted himself by his power of destruction. He preserved the child, but fulfilled in the soul that promise of his word unto Israel; "*I will destroy their idols and cause their images to cease.*" At the rebuke of the God of Jacob, Art and Science, as the chariot and horse of Pharaoh was cast into a "DEAD sleep." O how effectually is the iniquity of the heart done away, when God takes in hand to do it.

Now thus was the flesh crucified in its *affections*; this lust of the eye caused to pass away; and the idol which had made him to sin "*utterly abolished*" from his heart. The beauty of all his "pleasant pictures" was consumed; the lofty looks of the fame inspired man, humbled;

and the haughtiness of his proud heart brought down. He walked abroad *without his burden*, for it was *clean gone from off his shoulders*; when saying, "what have I any more to do with idols;" he solemnly, *as in the sight of God*, laid down his palette *for ever*: spread all his coveted treasures before the Lord; and cast his artistic spoils 'to the moles and the bats.' "Made willing in the day of God's power." And through this work of destruction to the flesh, there now was no division of the heart between Christ and the canvass, for it felt and increasingly feels to this day, "stablished strengthened, *settled*." Having seen an end of Arts' perfection, and with delighted eyes beheld the idols destruction, he says, (speaking the words of truth and soberness before God, in Christ) "my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord."

Yes, he is trusting in him for wisdom to guide, strength to stand, power to resist temptation, might to overcome opposition, and the fulfilment of the "yea and amen" promises made of God in Christ Jesus, for the time of trouble and affliction. He prays for faith that shall enable him to lay hold of the perfection of Jesus that he may live unto God; and the grace of faith that he may put on his righteousness and appropriate it as his own before God. That he may be preserved from all evil, and quickened unto all good; that God would go before him; be a 'wall of fire round *about him*,' and defend and bless him, now that *he his every hope and expectation*, had become '*all*' his salvation and '*all*' his desire.

This is the essential difference between his *present* position, in reference to the subject of painting, and that of his earlier days. The "young man" then did *not* wherewithal cleanse his way, by thus taking heed to his steps, according to the word of the Lord; but wandering from the covenant of his God, he made league with the inhabitants of the world, and mixed himself up with their abominable idolatries. Therefore the Lord strengthened the enemy to overcome him, (Judges iii. 12,) that he might go into captivity, to learn *wisdom*, and the way of righteousness, as did the children of Israel because "*they* regarded not the work of the Lord, neither considered the operation of his hands." And though he expects more or less to be *troubled* from this source through the insults of his tormenting foe to the day of his decease, still possessing a body of sin and death, and observing that even saints carry with them their infirmities to the grave; yet he bids defiance by the word and authority of God, to the devil's power of temptation as before, on *this* ground.* And he believes that if ever again he is in the position he has been on *this* subject, his damnation is secured.

Pride also, that "presumptuous sin," added to the destruction of his peace, for it deceived

* "Let him that *thinketh* HE standeth, take heed lest he fall." But to him that *knoweth* "THE LORD WILL MAINTAIN HIS CAUSE," being afflicted in soul and poor in spirit; let him rely upon the promise and rejoice in his trust. (Psalm cxl. 12, 13.) "That he who blesseth himself in the earth may bless himself in the God of truth."

him ; (Obad. iii.) and he was visited by the hot displeasure of him who had said, " I will spoil the pride of Israel and I will mar the pride of Judah." Proud of the height to which grace had raised him, he consumed the blessing upon his lusts ; and lifted up with the gifts wherewith nature had endowed him, (see Obad. 4th) he sought pleasure in the prosperity of the wicked. Like the leviathan whose scales are his pride, (Job xli. 15,) he thought his spiritual attainments were enough to preserve him, and the power of his own arm to protect him. He boasted in a strength not his own for *show*—but *use* ; and followed not those things which preserve the soul from falling ; (2 Pet. i. 10) but forgetting how and by whom he was purged from his old sins, his footsteps slipped and he fell. But shall Israel the " rod of God's inheritance" be as " Assyria, the rod of his anger !" Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith ; or shall the saw magnify itself against him that saweth with it ? or shall the rod and the staff lift themselves up *as if they were no wood ?*" Yes, the rod of pride blossomed and budded ; the tree of evil brought forth fruit unto death ; he ' exalted himself by his power'—and fell.* Forgetting the Lord that

* " I woo'd ambition, climb'd the pole,
And shone among the stars—but fell
Headlong in all my pride of soul,
Like Lucifer from heav'n to hell.

*I dream'd of bliss in pleasure's bowers,
While pillowing roses stay'd my head ;
But serpents hiss'd among the flow'rs ;
I woke—and thorns were all my bed."*

'made him,' and that without him he could do nothing (aright), he trusted to his own heart, and leaned on his own wisdom and strength. It was *my* mountain that was to stand for ever, and the great I—that was never to be moved. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked," (that is rebelled.)

Therefore, said the Lord, "His soul shall be *diminished* through the detestable and abominable things of his heart." 'He that exalteth *himself* shall be abased.' "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, thy backslidings shall reprove thee." I will send unto the fat ones, leanness, and under *his* glory will I kindle a burning, like the burning of a fire, that shall consume his comforts and destroy his blessings. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take away him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. For once have I sworn in my holiness that his seed shall endure for ever, his throne shall be established before me on the earth, as is the sun for a faithful witness in the heavens, and I will not lie unto my David. Therefore, as it is not meet for carnal men to see the king's dishonour, I will take away his reproach and restore him to myself, that he may not 'die without instruction,' but live in righteousness to the praise of my name. I will return and have compassion upon him, for knowing his frame and remembering that he is but human nature, I will have mercy upon him, and he shall magnify me for this blessing; I will abundantly, pardon, and he shall glorify me for this bounty. Therefore "the light kindled in Israel that shall

be for a fire, and the Holy One (the consumer of his people's sins) for a flame, whilst the vengeance of God shall be upon the invention of his heart, the body with a blessing in it shall be preserved, but it shall burn up and devour his "*thorns*" and his "*briars*" IN ONE DAY. And it shall come to pass that *in that day*, his burden shall be taken away from off his shoulders, and the yoke from off his neck, BECAUSE OF THE ANOINTING." (Isa. x. 27.)

Blessed be the Most High God, the God of heaven; the faithful God who in all ages of the world hath "visited his people as he hath said, and done unto them as he hath spoken," (Gen. xxi. 1), how exactly did he fulfil the promises of his word unto the writer, and perform the intents of his heart unto him *even to the very letter*; setting forth the great "love of God" and his faithfulness to the oath and promise of his word, which he made in covenant with the soul and his Son Jesus Christ, and upon which he caused him to hope. And how bountifully did he deal with him in the day of visitation, when he redeemed him with judgment; loading him with benefits and blessings, and making him to receive at the Lord's hands, "*double for all his sins.*"

Yes, there is a two-fold blessing in every merciful act of God. So here, there was not only the child spared, the idol abolished; the child preserved, the image destroyed; but the burden of guilt was taken away from him, and the blessing of 'peace' restored unto him. Satan *was confounded*—the soul comforted, and God glorified.

Thus Jesus always effects for his people a
“double cure,”

He cleanses from sin's GUILT, and POWER.

And now he can walk abroad and contemplate the beauties of creation without contamination, and study the works of nature without idolatry. The created glory of the incorruptible God as displayed in the broad expanse, is no longer changed into imagery representation for the sinful indulgence of the flesh, but he walks along the flower strewn country path, and beholds the clothed beauties of wild nature, or the verdure clad garments of earth, luxuriant through cultivation for man, with temperance, moderation, and chastity. Nevertheless, pleasing and agreeable as is meditation amid the varied beauties of the terrestrial garden, the soul is unsatisfied without the Lord of all the earth is there to bless. And though in an incomparably purer element than under the contaminating influence of worldly associations, yet the free experienced pleasures of the mind, surrounded by the essential sublimities of fair nature, serene and unsullied as it may appear, is felt to be perfect slavery, compared with that liberty of soul which now made free from the pollution of that gaily dressed idol—NATURE, by the liberating power of Christ, is realized and enjoyed.

Therefore the reflections of the soul no longer distorted to the perverse ends of Art's innumerable evils, or embittered by the multiplying sorrows of

false devotion, are raised to elevated meditation upon the all creative powers of God, who "founded the world, and the fulness thereof:" whilst the musing thoughts of the mind are transferred from the beauties of the sun illumined nature, to him who "formed the earth by his power, and garnished the heavens by his Spirit." His majesty is seen in the rocky cliffs and rolling ocean; his mercy in the manifold arrangements made for all created life; his faithfulness in the annual return of nature's supplies for the use of man. And thus he goes out into the fields, not to inflame himself with the passionate study of a picture, but as Isaac did, to meditate and pray (Gen. xxiv. 63) for

He loves not nature less,
But God the more.

He, the God of nature and of grace, and Maker of all the great wonders of celestial and terrestrial creation, is raised infinitely higher in the soul's estimation, by the sober study of his mighty works; for "the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord," whilst the "heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work." Therefore, when he considers the heavens which God hath made, the moon and the stars which he hath ordained, *he* is constrained to say in the litteness of *his* existence, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou *visitest him*." And thus it has the salutary effect of *sinking him* lower than ever in his own estima-

tion, and establishing the greatness of God in self's stead. And though the bright luminary of the skies, still kindles an animating warmth by its shinings, yet Jesus, the greater glory of the heaven of heavens, shines brighter in the soul; and so brilliant is this everlasting light of Israel to the anointed eyes of the redeemed, that

“ Ten thousand thousand suns are dim
In lustre, when compar'd with him.”

For he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and there is nothing create, or uncreate that can compare with this. Moreover, even nature itself with all its wonders and mysteries, sinks into nothingness before him; for “his glory is above the earth, and God hath set it beyond the heavens;” all is to wax old, whilst he alone endures. Nature, and all created things, are clothed in the sable garments of mourning as to futurity, whilst he is covered with increasing light from hour to hour. Fire and vapour of smoke from the bottomless pit shall blacken the air and discolour the heavens' fair face. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood; the elements melt with fervent heat; every mountain and hill be removed out of place; the earth also, and the works therein shall be burned up, the wicked hurled down into hell, and all become vast nonentity, cleared away by God's besom of destruction at the brightness of his coming, to make room for the bursting glories of the “new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Jesus, who is ‘God's

salvation,' shall then reign for ever and ever. This God is our God, O believer in the Lord; and our deadness unto sin and life unto righteousness here, is the earnest of our resurrection unto eternal life hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

To this joyous felicity in Jesus, the writer is now aspiring, being raised up thereto by the same power that raised up Jesus from the dead. And to this heavenly aspiration, this "hope of eternal life" he is quickened in apprehension by the confirming testimony of the continued work of the Lord within. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun the good work in him, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Confidence, therefore, was confirmed by this merciful deliverance at the hands of the Lord. The idol of his heart was destroyed by the power of God, to whom be all the praise.

Thus was the work *effectually** done—and the year 1848, the most eventful for many centuries in casting the fates of the nations, and causing the rapid fulfilment of scripture predictions; was characterized as the "year of jubilee" to the writer's soul, wherein the burden of his 'besetting

* "Self glory" fades and all the creature's pride,
With every foolish sin that fain would please us;
When by th' ANOINTING Spirit,
God sinks *their* senseless merit;
And shows *His* saving worth:—then let me hide
My name and fame, to spread the "FAME OF JESUS."

sin' was removed; the slave released, and he returned unto his possession and family.

Glory to God in the highest for ever and ever.
Amen.

FINIS.

John Nichols, Printer, Milton Press,
Chandos Street, Strand, London.





